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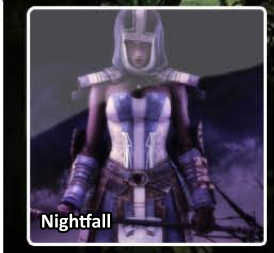
OCTOBER - ISSUE #4 BY THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE COMMUNITY

In this issue:

The Dead and Undead
Mad King Thorn & Halloween
The Sylvari
Title Hunters: Survivor
Halloween Art competition
And more....







THIS ISSUE'S THEME:

THE SHADOWS OF TYRIA

DHUUM

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FOREWORD:

The Hallowed eve is coming
somewhere down the lane
Creeping from the walls
to get you in his bane.

The hallowed eve is coming
along with its drinks and candy
Scared children hiding in their closet
afraid for the ghostly dandy.

The hallowed eve is coming
preparing for the arrival of the never-born
The signs are clear
He's coming, the Mad King Thorn.

In this issue we focus on bringing you a ghostly experience, we tell you about Mad King Thorn and how all that's know about him. Where we traveled to Cantha in our last issue, we'll now tell you something about Elona and their Nightfall. Then we also have an article on the Undead and ofcourse the next god that we'll discuss, which is a fallen one, Dhuum. We also got an interview with Mad Queen Malafide and our follow-up interview with Colin Johanson. Last but not least we got our returning articles, On The Tube and Arghore's Jokes but also our own reviews on Ghosts of Ascalon.

Enjoy this issue, and be sure to leave your feedback at http://www.guildmag.com

This issue:

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I am King Thorn of Kryta! I command you to entertain me on this Hallowed Eve!
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→ **Nightfall**
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→ **Follow-up interview with Colin Johanson**
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A recap of some of the most entertaining Guild Wars videos on YouTube.
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Find out about the existence and stories of this dangerous place.
→ **Halloween Workshop**
The results are in! Check out the winning entries.
→ **Sylvari**
Background lore on the newly sprung race in GW2.
→ **End of the line...**
The last tidbits and a preview of what we're planning for the next issue.









Chibi by Izari

Mad King Thorn

When the moon rises high over Lion's Arch
And the wind moans through the most hollow of eves
Shutter your homes this holiday
Steer clear of the shadows
For on this night, they say,
A long-addled spirit returns from the grave
Pumpkin upon his head,
A wicked deed within his heart
A pint of witch's brew for all those who misbehave
Heed these words, all ye who dare enter here:
Bind your souls to the mortal realm
For the regent of madness draws near.



As the days of Tyria grow shorter and the nights colder, Tyrians prepare for the fated day of madness that befalls Tyria every year - All Hallows Eve. Those citizens who know of this day will tell you to get out of town while you can, or fall victim to the overnight changes that mark the occasion. For when the moon begins to grin down on Tyria and the air is filled with the screams of the damned, it can mean only one thing - Mad King Thorn is coming.

King Thorn of Kryta

Long ago, in the days of ancient Kryta, Thorn reigned as king of the nation making his home in the city of Lion's Arch. Citizens would bow down to King Thorn, not daring to look him directly in the eyes as not to cause their hasty demise. In life Thorn is said to have been considered a good king by his people, however those quick enough to trigger his temper would say otherwise (if they lived long enough to tell anyone that is!) as his punishments are not to be taken lightly, and could result in an entire village being skinned alive.

Thorn is said to have made enemies in his mortal life, such as the tengu who caused chaos in the kingdom of Kryta, causing Thorn to carry a deep hatred of the tengu race even long after his death. Each autumn the horsemen of the Mad King make sure to send willing Tyrians out to carry out "justice" on the tengu. He also had rivals, such as the undead lord Palawa Joko who Thorn wished to destroy for his disrespect.

Even though a King of Kryta, Thorn is also well known in the lands of Elona. In ancient times, Thorn would often travel to Elona after falling for the royal princess that dwelled there. After trying to win her heart through many gifts, the King finally succeeded by giving her a mask fashioned from mandragor carapaces... a gift that some say may have also been aided by Thorn putting a sword to her father's throat.

By Free Runner

Although successful in winning the heart of his new bride, a tragedy befell her, something which the horsemen say caused many years of war to follow. It's unknown what happened to the princess, though Thorn's horsemen are sure that the grudge the king worked up over the incident is long gone. Upon his return to the mortal world each year, Thorn visits the city of Kamadan to celebrate the first time he saw his ill-fated bride.

The Mad Kings Return

"I am King Thorn of Kryta! I command you to entertain me on this Hallowed Eve!"
- Mad King Thorn

In death, Thorn is no longer just a revered King of Kryta, but a powerful figure known in even the far corners of the Underworld where he is sometimes referred to by Grenth's Reapers as the Autumn Lunatic. However in death Thorn can only travel to the Mortal Realm during Autumn, and while his crazed disciples known as the Lunatic Court attempt to undo this seal their attempts have yet to preveil.

The annual return of the Mad King is a cause for both celebration amongst brave Tyrians and fear amongst citizens afraid of falling victim to his malicious, magical pranks. Each return is marked by the screams of citizens rushing out to the streets after finding out that, in honor of the kings return, they have been turned into a random creature. Another sign is the appearance of the undead horsemen who arrive in the towns asking for trophies to dedicate to the Mad King in return for gifts worthy of the celebration. In particular the arrival of the undead horseman Bruce marks the event, with the terrified herald warning of the king's impending arrival on the Hallowed Eve. Additionally a personal guard unit are known to appear within the cities, motionless until the King arrives, announcing his presence in the mortal realm.

On the Hallowed Eve, Mad King Thorn appears before Tyrians and Elonians alike, towering over them with carved features glowing upon his signature pumpkin head. Thorn invites everyone to join him in a celebration of himself, requesting music, dancing, cheers and respect from his audience with threats of death to those who disobey. He is well known for telling jokes that often mock the stature of dwarves and asura, but rather than being remembered for the jokes themselves, he is remembered and feared for what becomes of those who dare not laugh.

In life Thorn was said to be a military genius but not only that, he was a self proclaimed master of the strategic game Rock-Paper-Scissors. Announcing this to all those present at the celebration, Thorn begins to challenge the audience to one on one duels with the winner gaining gifts and the loser being put to death. Some could say the maniacal monarch games always end the same way... but others would prefer not to speak.

Facts of Thorn

Not many dare to ask the Mad King questions, fearing what kind of answer they would receive. Therefore there are little known facts about Thorn that are whispered amongst the horsemen. For while he may be considered a borderline insane king, Thorn was once human and still has fears, likes, dislikes and, as mentioned, enemies.

Other than the tengu, Thorn also has a vivid hatred of the skree harpies that reside in Elona. What caused him to consider them an ancient enemy is unknown but his horsemen are more than happy to accept limb donations from the harpies. Additionally while it is not known what the Kings stance was during life, other races are considered enemies by the horsemen due to the lack of participation in the celebrations. The Stone Summit dwarves, White Mantle and the grawl of Ascalon are examples of this, being the subject of bounties by the king's servants due to lack of acknowledgement of his greatness. Other races are often targeted for trophies to be presented to the king, such as the charr, centaur tribes and even the fire imps. It is also said in legend that after an attack on the king by the smartest Ettin of Kryta, Thorn banished them to the Fire Island Chain where they continue to reside to this day.

Little known things about Thorn are his fears and likes. For while some may consider him to be the root of all evil, even Thorn fears something - termites. His reason for this strange fear may be related to the addition of his pumpkin head following his death... but only Thorn knows for sure. The King is known to enjoy Elonian delicacies such as Mandragor Soup and drake flesh and is also said to enjoy the customs of Elona, such as the tradition of sacrificing iboga to ensure a good harvest, though his enjoyment probably lies more in the sacrificing part of the tradition than the idea itself.

Prepare Yourself!

Mad King Thorn is a name that can strike fear and excitement into the hearts of Tyrians. Each year adventurers and heroes alike gather in the towns of Lions Arch and Kamadan, Jewel of Istan, to witness his return and join the celebrations. Who knows? Thorn and his devoted Lunatic Court may keep coming for centuries.

But for now, prepare yourself. Shutter your windows and pray to your gods... for the *Mad King* is coming.

By Free Runner

Dutch's talk with Mad Queen Malafide

The Guild Wars community is awesome, it has quite a few great people making sure that you enjoy the game as much as you do. It starts with the Community Managers who do their awesome job of monitoring the community, giving feedback and responding to players' questions. In addition, you also have people that enjoy entertaining the community, or even host a fansite to show their dedication to the game. I believe these people are just the start of the Guild Wars community, you guys are what makes the community great. Every issue from now on, I'll be interviewing someone who has done a great job for the Guild Wars community, and I'll share with you what they're up to and what they've done to enhance the community.

In this issue, I'll talk with the Queen of Halloween, Mad Queen Malafide. She's been an iconic player in the Guild Wars world, organizing events for Halloween and Wintersday. Since Halloween is coming up, I knew she was the perfect fit for this article!

Dutch Sunshine: Hey Mad Queen Malafide, how are you doing?

Mad Queen Malafide: Marvelous Darling! I feel like I just burned my first village. It's really already my third this morning, but I feel splendid!

Dutch: Could you please introduce yourself to our readers?

MQM: Of course darling. My name is Mad Queen Malafide. They also sometimes call me Queen of Halloween. I'm not sure if that title is deserved, but I'll leave that up to the players. What I do, is host a lot of community events in Tyria. I'm most known for the Halloween and Christmas events which I usually host together with Daniel Frozenwind, who a lot of your readers might be familiar with. I can often be found in Lion's Arch, which I consider my home away from home. I've been in Tyria since the beginning, that's a long time to spend in one world.

Dutch: You must be very old… err, young then?

MQM: Now, now, a gentleman never asks a lady for her age. It's hard to tell my true age from just my looks. As you may or may not know, I am cursed with immortality. I may look like most Tyrians. But I'm not human.

Dutch: Okay, so you were there during the giganticus lupicus?

MQM: Oh no, not at all. I came here shortly before the Searing. I am originally from the world Ashynnt. Ashynnt is a world that is not unlike Tyria, but it lacks Charr, Dwarves and Asura. It also lacks Mesmers. Yes, some worlds are better than others.

Dutch: How do you mean, some worlds are better than others, what's up with the mesmers?

MQM: Oh how can I put this delicately… necromancy is an art that requires years of study, and dedication to a great god. But mesmers… not really a profession, is it? Doesn't take much study, and their goddess isn't much of a goddess, and they wear masks… what's with the masks?

Dutch: I've recently spoken to a fortune teller who told me necromancers will wear masks in the future too.

MQM: Nonsense! It will never happen. We necromancers are far too proud of our beautiful looks to hide them behind a mask. No, let's leave the masks to the people who have something to be ashamed of… like people who work in a theater.



By Dutch Sunshine

Dutch's talk with Mad Queen Malafide

Dutch: We'll see, speaking of which, let's do another classic, where do you see yourself between now and 250 years later?

MQM: Well… I'm not quite sure how to answer that… I was hoping to be back in Ashynnt eventually. That does not mean I'll never return to Tyria, 250 years is a long time. I'm sure I'll drop back in once things settle. Right now though, I really want to get back home. I'm sure Miya feels the same way. Miya is my monk companion, for those who do not know her.

Dutch: So you'll be leaving us shortly?

MQM: I didn't say that! Oh… I may have said too much already, lets say there are plans. But it's not easy. Traveling through the mists, as many experts can tell you, is not an easy affair. It is very dangerous, there are many risks. So this Queen will make sure she does her homework well before she attempts something of that scale. But I certainly have thought about it.



Dutch: Hmm, interesting, you know, Halloween is coming up quite quickly, any plans so far on how you'll spend the night?

MQM: Well, we have a sensational event coming up of course! The King and Queen's Horrorween is now a yearly tradition. On the day Mad Monarch arrives, Daniel Frozenwind and I shall be hosting yet another Horrorween. We have a lot of things planned. There will be some returning activities, but also plenty of new ones, and of course there will be plenty of great prizes!

Dutch: That sounds cool, I bet a lot of our readers will want to attend that one! Coming back to the topic of community events, what brought you to hosting these?

MQM: Well, it all started with very small Halloween events. Most of those were funded with anything I could acquire myself. I've always been willing to help other players by handing out items that might be useful to them. I think it really started with the role-playing, initially it was just me and Miya in Lion's Arch, acting out these funny scenes between an evil necromancer and a cute monk girl. A lot of players seemed entertained, and even wanted to join in. That basically created the platform for hosting an event.

Dutch: But you ended up with someone who I think is your opposite? Daniel Frozenwind?

MQM: Well, the characters might be opposites, but we host events with the same passion. It was him who approached me, asking if we could team up for once. So we decided to host "one" event together, and it was huge! I think we were both a bit surprised by how big that was. After that, more events followed.

Dutch: Seems like you guys were a huge success then.

MQM: I think it's important to stress that we never intended to gain fame with these events. We did it for the community, we always have, and it's purely to entertain a lot of players. That mission statement has not changed in all those years. There have sometimes been players accusing us of being desperate for attention, but I think they simply miss the point. That is not at all what these events are about. There have even been a few players attempting to copy our events, but not with the same goal or heart. Fortunately, players can tell the difference, they feel instantly if someone is hosting an event for his own glory, or for the fun of others. The Guild Wars community really is great. There are a lot of great yearly events now. Like Pinkday in LA, the Mursaat Rally (now called: Mantlecon) and the Royal Ascalon Family Masquerade Ball. We support all these events, and I'm sorry if I left a lot of events out.

By Dutch Sunshine

Dutch's talk with Mad Queen Malafide

Dutch: Yeah, it sounds like you guys started a huge chain reaction of events.

MQM: Well, I wouldn't put it like that. It's not like we are responsible for these great initiatives. But I do believe the community spirit is very much alive in Guild Wars, even now. I think I'd like to thank ArenaNet for their support of the community events. They really care a lot about their community, and last year's Halloween was amazing. They did such a good job. So I'm highly looking forward to this year's Halloween. It will be a blast, or so help me Grenth, I'll strangle this random Xunlai Agent.

Dutch: Yeah, they're pretty much community centered I guess.

MQM: People sometimes take that for granted I think. Not all companies are like that.

Dutch: Now for something more personal, how is it, playing a character with world fame?

MQM: Well, my celebrity status is limited to Tyria only, so I try not to let it get too much to my head. Tempting as it may. But I do get occasional marriage proposals at least once a month. That's certainly flattering… in a creepy way. Being recognized in towns and outposts is always a great starter for conversations with players who have not been to any of the events yet. Though sometimes people react very surprised when I either appear in their party… or people in the district are chanting my name. It sometimes surprises me as well how fast people spot me as I enter a district. I enjoy it though, people are very kind. There are also the occasional really nasty messages you receive, but I try not to think too much about those.

Dutch: So before we close off, anything else you'd like to tell to our readers?

MQM: First of all, everyone is invited to the Horrorween of course, even mesmers, just keep it to yourself. Also, study hard to be an evil sorcerer and/or necromancer. Always aim high. It's okay to have world domination as a goal.

Dutch: Thanks for your time!

MQM: No problem, darling.



A few shots about the preparations for this year's Horrorween!
(For a little more info, go to the next article)

By Dutch Sunshine


THE KING AND QUEENS
HORRORWEEN 2010
HOSTED BY:
MAD QUEEN MALAFIDE
&
DANIEL FROZENWIND
OCTOBER 31ST LION'S ARCH INTERNATIONAL I

NIGHTFALL

Nightfall is an old legend... a prophecy of the end of days.

- Kormir

The dark prophecy that had been whispered by heretics fell upon Tyria. The unholy warriors and magicians saw the signs of the return of their banished god... and so did they begin the preparations for his coming. In 1075 AE, Night fell.

PRELUDE TO THE PROPHECY:

Once there were not five gods, but six. The sixth was Abaddon, imprisoned by his siblings in the Realm of Torment.

- Kormir

A thousand of years ago, Tyria knew six gods: Lyssa, Melandru, Grenth, Dwayna, Balthazar and Abaddon. The gods walked among their mortal followers; they helped them in their wars and their advancement. They governed their domains and tried to upkeep the balance on the planet as much as possible. Until one day around 1 BE, when Abaddon, God of Secrets and Water, gave out the gift of magic too freely. The result was an enormous, apocalyptic war between the races which could have led to total annihilation. To prevent this from happening, the gods trapped the knowledge of magic within a tall stone. Then, they broke it into four equal, but opposing parts (each representing a different type of magic) and one keystone – without the key, the other four could never be reassembled.



King Doric beseeching his gods to regulate Abaddon's "gift."



Ancient inscriptions were found near the Jokanur excavation site. Scholars speculated that this one was prophecizing Nightfall.



The chains, that were forged by Balthazar himself, kept the God of Secrets shackled for more than 1,000 years.

We don't know the full extent of the truth about the reason for the war, however, many speculate that the regulation of magic infuriated Abaddon so much that he began acting on his own agenda. In order to accomplish something big, he "blessed" the people who worshipped and loved him the most: a seafaring tribe of humans called Margonites. The "blessing" transformed them into demonic beings. Then, he marshaled his forces to besiege the Heavens.

The response of the other five gods was a quick one. They rallied their own followers and led them to the shore of the Crystal Sea, where their maddened sibling was staging his forces. Even though Abaddon and his army could easily take on two gods and defeat them, the combined might of the five was enough to quell his insurrection. The five victors banished Abaddon to a realm of torment, along with his followers. They imprisoned Abaddon in the heart of his realm, with chains forged by Balthazar himself. Unable to escape from the tormenting anguish and loneliness, the fallen god became more and more maddened over the years. He vowed to avenge his defeat, punish his brothers and sisters, and corrupt

ABADDON'S MACHINATIONS:

Abaddon has worked for centuries to free himself.

- The Sunspear hero

The dark god did not spend the next 1,000 years lamenting over his defeat and imprisonment. He started a slow but steady spread over the realm, claiming more land from the Forgotten prisoners, gaining new allies, and spawning more demons. We don't know if

By Thalador Doomspeaker

Abaddon had sent agents to Tyria before the first documented emissaries arrived, but 800 years later he began the preparations for Nightfall. In 872 AE, Abaddon scored two major goals. His titan legions became the "gods" of the charr – which led to the Searing and the Cataclysm 200 years later – and tricked Shiro Tagachi, bodyguard to Emperor Angsiyan of Cantha, with a demon in human form into murdering his master in the middle of the Harvest Ceremony. The following, violent death of Shiro the Betrayer caused the Jade Wind... just as Abaddon had planned.

In 1071 AE, he celebrated the Sinking of Orr and the destruction of Arah, the City of the Gods (a fitting revenge against his former associates). He also gained a powerful ally in the form of an undead lich, Vizier Khilbron, who initiated the Cataclysm due to another deception by one of the fallen god's agents. However, his first invasion of Tyria failed when young Ascalonian heroes closed the Door of Komalie (that leads to the Realm of Torment) and decimated his titan forces.



Abaddon made his influence felt during the crisis of the Tomb of Primeval Kings. His tentacles tore apart the wonderful golden arches of the tomb.

In the same year, Shiro, who was sentenced to become an Envoy and shepherd the newly dead, made another betrayal. He turned on his employer, the Oracle of the Mists, and his Envoy comrades by taking control of the spirits of the dead and turning them into his personal army. His desires were more than just becoming flesh and blood again and conquering Cantha. According to one of Suun's, the Oracle of the Mists, mysterious speeches, more was at stake than the safety of Cantha. Scholars of Durmand speculate that Shiro was making preparations for, or trying to bring closer Abaddon's return. Thanks to Canthan heroes, this plot was thwarted as well.

In the meantime, Abaddon made pacts with the previous God of Death, Dhuum, and Balthazar's half-brother, Menzies, the Lord of Shadows and Destruction. Dhuum's minions, led by Menzies' Darkness demons, partially took control of the Underworld, stormed the Hall of Heroes and devoured some heroic spirits of the past. They also tried to gain more power for their masters by stealing the Celestial Charges during the Dragon Festival of 1072 AE. Menzies' shadow army led an offensive against Balthazar's eternals in the Fissure of Woe, but was eventually defeated just like the Ender of All's forces.

Even though there were more failures than successes, Abaddon was closer to his goal than ever. The coming of Nightfall was inevitable...

NIGHT FALLS:

Prepare the way. You lead. I shall follow. Nightfall comes.

- General Kahyet

The last phase of Abaddon's plan was looming over Tyria. The heretics awakened. Their time had come to serve their dark lord once more.

NIGHTFALL – THE CELESTIAL EVENT:

I sense a disturbance in the skies. A presence I have not felt since...

- An unnamed scholar of the Order of the Sky

Nightfall was also prophesied by the stars. The members of the Order of the Sky met in the Astralarium of Istan, and studied the heavens in order to follow the events as they occurred on our planet. It is intriguing that the astronomical happenings can be related to events on Tyria. The stars seem to reflect the past, the present, and the future of our world.

By Thalador Doomspeaker



The stars were foretelling the events of Nightfall.
Do they have something to say about the future as well?



Torment claws appeared in the "targeted" area as Abaddon's twisted realms started their push towards Tyria.

NIGTHFALL – THE TRANSFORMATION:

It is a demonic manifestation. A part of Abaddon's world pushing into the living world.

- Jurah, the Master of Whispers

As the walls of Abaddon's prison weakened, the more his evil could pour forth onto Tyria. Then, the malevolent energy would spread and use the minds of others to rupture reality and flood Tyria with more and more tormented minions.

In the meantime, Abaddon dreamt the nightfallen visage of every area on the planet, and once the dream was complete, he used the contaminated minds as harpoons to make a "targeted" land fall into night.

In the past, those who have been tainted by Abaddon's touch were sentenced to an eternal torment within Abaddon's realm, even if they were innocent and good. Only through such merciless measures could the gods prevent the contamination of the rest of the reality.



The effect of Nightfall on Marga Coast and the Garden of Seborhin.

By Thalador Doomspeaker

NIGTHFALL BEGINS:

Night falls. The time of the Five Gods is at an end.

- Unknown prophet, probably Elder Jonah

Abaddon's plans were already in motion, however, without his mortal followers working in Tyria and an unexpected aid, his return would've happened later than it did. We don't know the reason for Kahyet turning her back on the Five Gods, but it seems very possible that Kahyet encountered Abaddon's knowledge, and shared it with her "pupil", the aspiring warmarshal of Kourna, descendant of the great Turai Ossa, Varesh Ossa. They had not been corrupted by the dark god yet, but even knowing about Abaddon and his secrets was enough to turn them to his side.

As I mentioned before, history would tell a different tale if Abaddon had not "received" help from someone. The Sunspear Spearmarshal, Kormir was always interested in the ruins of the first city in Elonian history, and the capital of the great Primeval Dynasty, Fahranur. During one of her expeditions, Kormir found an ancient inscription. She read the words and by doing that, she awakened the Apocrypha, an enchanted monolith of Abaddon. Through the evil construct Kormir was touched by Abaddon, which led to an ironic outcome in the end.

THE RITUALS AND THE RESULTS OF NIGHTFALL:

She will turn the world into Torment, and unleash Abaddon into that world.
- Morgahn

THE APOCRYPHA:

I read the words of the Apocrypha. I felt his spirit. I was drawn into his web.
- Kormir



It could only continue because of luck – or perhaps not. Varesh and her entourage made a formal visit to Istan, and sometime during this trade mission, Kournan troops led by General Kahyet herself entered the forbidden ruins of Fahranur, and gained an important piece of information regarding Nightfall, form the awakened Apocrypha. Shortly afterwards, Varesh left for Kourna to begin the rituals, while Kahyet had some business with the corsairs. A business she was never able to finish...

GANDARA, THE MOON FORTRESS AND THE PLAZA OF THE FIVE (SIX) GODS:

Fools! Your gods are weak! My god gives me strength! Abaddon!

- Warmarshal Varesh Ossa

A few days after Kahyet's death a war broke out between Istan and Kourna. Istani warships besieged Gandara, while their troops boarded and advanced through the crescent city. For some time, it seemed that Varesh's madness could be stopped when they cornered her and the remnants of the defenders in the Plaza of the Five Gods. However, Varesh had prepared something to properly "greet" the invaders. Through an unholy ritual, Varesh summoned demons from the Realm of Torment, who made quick work of the Sunspears. Spearmarshal Kormir was captured and blinded (by a greater demon called the Hunger), while the Sunspear heroes fled.

Varesh scored a great victory. Not only did she break the Sunspears, but the ritual made Abaddon stronger, and his prison weaker.
The Plaza was also the scene of the only known mural of Abaddon. It is unknown whether it was a new depiction, or if it was one of the surviving things related to the dark god.

The results were terrible. The Realm of Torment was constantly seeping into Tyria. Even the land was corrupted by Abaddon's tormenting power. Large chunks of earth rose to wreak havoc in Kourna's countryside. Two greater demons began acting in Elona to serve their lord, although none could accomplish its given task. The Drought, intending to taint the Elon, was destroyed in the Mahnkelon Waterworks, while its "brother", the Hunger, was killed by the Sunspears it was ought to slay.



Varesh in Gandara, moments before she finished her first known convocation with Abaddon.

By Thalador Doomspeaker

THE TRANSMUTATION:

And thus was magic gifted to Jadoth, chosen of Abaddon, the first of the Margonites.

- Scriptures of Abaddon, 1BE

Margonites were long thought to be extinct. However, due to the fact that Abaddon was slowly but steadily reclaiming his power, he could "bless" Varesh's troops in the same way he had empowered the Margonites. The result was demonic, stronger soldiers in the service of Varesh and her god. Abaddon also sent a large portion of his Margonites into Tyria.



THE SEBELKEH BASILICA:

It is too late to stop; this part of the ritual is complete! The walls of my lord's prison are being being torn away and Torment is swallowing the world!

- Varesh, Abaddon's Prophet

With the Istani military in disarray, Varesh moved her forces north to Vabbi with the goal to hunt the fleeing Sunspears responsible for General Bayel's (Ascalonian heritaged officer in the Kournan military, who was killed by Sunspears) assassination. However, Varesh's true motives became clear – seemingly – when she started a war, now with the Vabbians. Although the combined strength of Prince Ahmtru's battalions and the Sunspear routed the attacking Kournans and the Margonites, Varesh could begin another ritual within the ornate Sebelkeh Basilica. She sacrificed the priests and priestesses of Lyssa to Abaddon and left a demon, the Blasphemy, to fully corrupt the temple. The temple was saved and purified from the taint with the death of the Blasphemy, but Varesh was very close to her final goal. Only one ritual remained...



Loyal soldier and his corrupted warmarshal face to face after the massacre at the Temple of Lyssa.

THE RUPTURES:

Yes, weak mortals. Come to me. You will provide precious amusement, and your death will herald a beginning to Nightfall.

- Harbinger of Nightfall

Abaddon became stronger, and the walls of his confinement were breaking apart. So did the barriers between Tyria and his realm... Abaddon dreamt the fate of every area on the planet and started pushing the horrid caricatures of the regions onto Tyria. At first, they happened only in Elona, albeit we have no knowledge of other regions falling into night on the other two continents.

The two nightfallen lands in Elona were Marga Coast and the Garden of Seborhin. Each transformation was brought forth by special demons: the Harbingers of Twilight and Nigthfall. Fortunately for the (surviving) inhabitants of the areas, the demons were killed, and the transformation of the land stopped, but this allowed Varesh to have a really great advantage over her pursuers.

By Thalador Doomspeaker

THE MOUTH OF TORMENT:

Abaddon reclaims his possessions, soon his true power will be revealed and the door to his prison opened.

- Prophet Varesh

The very place were Abaddon was cast down into Torment – and probably the epicenter of the disaster that created the Crystal Desert and the Desolation. The site also contained three pieces of equipment that belonged to Abaddon: his mask, his gauntlet, and his sword. To finish what she had started, Varesh needed to bind together these pieces of the god's armor. That would have freed the Dark God of Secrets and brought him through the Mouth (a writhing globe of dark energy that led to the Realm of Torment). As the ritual progressed, the Horde of Darkness, the very Margonites who fought alongside Abaddon when he besieged the Gates of Heaven, rallied for battle – only to be slain by the encroaching Sunspears. The ritual was already in motion, so Varesh could deal with "annoying" Sunspears herself. After a long and brutal battle, the prophet of Abaddon fell dead on the ground, but even death could not stop her. Her maddened soul was blessed by Abaddon, and she returned as the supreme commander of "his majesty's" forces, in the form of a Margonite. Although she was significantly more powerful as a demon, she was defeated again, and for the last time.

The ritual was abolished, but Abaddon reclaimed the majority of his power. It would have only taken him a few days to finally shatter Balthazar's chains and set foot on Tyria once more. He became arrogant and overconfident...



Abaddon was slowly reclaiming his possessions, and so did his power grew. His mask is about to unite with his master after more than 1,000 years.

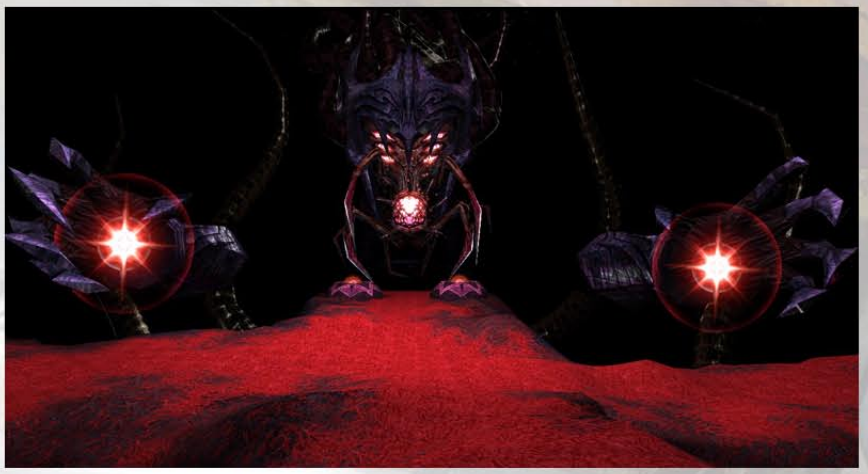
DAWNRISE:

Night fell, and the time of the Five Gods ended. Yet after every night, comes the new dawn of a new day.

- Unknown prophet, probably Elder Jonah

Abaddon did not think that he could be stopped at that moment. However, he seemed to be desperate after the Sunspears and their guide, Kormir (who was drawn into Torment because of her contamination), broke the Soulveir (which dammed the River of Souls) from which he could have gained enough power to break free. Then, the last line of his defense, the souls of the undead Khilbron and Shiro Tagachi, were destroyed in the Temple of the Six Gods (the ancient temple where Margonites defaced the statues of the gods, and which was drawn into Torment after Abaddon's defeat).

Eventually, the Sunspears brought the fight to the Dark God himself. Each of them blessed by the gods, they were stronger than Abaddon had expected them to be. After a diabolical



Abaddon, hours away from the finale of Nightfall... and his defeat.

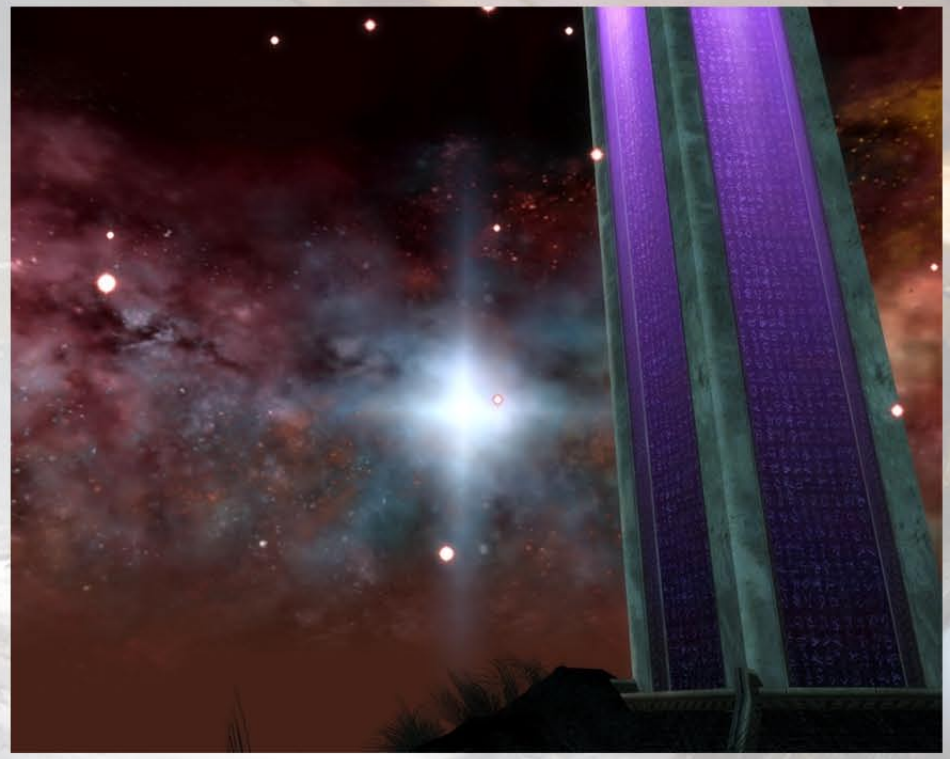
By Thalador Doomspeaker

battle, Abaddon was grievously wounded... his physical form was dying. In order to avenge everything, and punish the gods even if he couldn't laugh in their faces, he released all of his pent-up power, which (according to the heroes) could've destroyed both the Realm of Torment and Tyria. But in a moment of unmatched heroism, Kormir jumped right into the power that was seconds away from exploding. The special blessing, that the gods bestowed upon her, soaked up the power and knowledge of Abaddon. In 1075 AE, the God of Secrets ceased to exist. Instead, a new god was born. Kormir, Goddess of Truth, Spirit and Order became the sixth true god of Tyria.

"Nigthfall has come and gone." As the goddess said herself. The nightfallen lands began to heal, and the demons were defeated. Kormir could begin the long and tiresome work of the Realm of Torment's restoration.

The question remains, though. Are there more dark prophecies that threaten us and Tyria? What do the stars tell us about them? Will they be inevitable? Watch the heavens, and maybe you will get the answer...

- Thalador Doomspeaker
Day 215 of the Season of the Scion, 1079 After the Exodus



The beautiful sight that the Elonian heroes saw in the Throne of Secrets. Many scholars tried to decipher what it was. Some say it was the light of Kormir's ascension, another group believes it was the unearthly light of the Hall of Heroes, while others simply think that it was another star, namely the First Sun that was mentioned by the wise Forgotten, the Keeper of Light.

By Thalador Doomspeaker

Demonic Armies

Heretics of the Mists

"Outside the world we know, malefic forces watch and wait, scheming of ways to manifest in the realm of flesh. Their methods range from the subtle to the shocking: whispers in the minds of the troubled, plagues creeping across the corrupted countryside, innocents transformed into ravenous abominations, and stranger creations. Civilizations arise to defend humanity against this evil but sometimes, civilization fails."

-Unknown author

It is the darkness, the abyss, that binds us together, the light which casts our distinguishing features into view. Tyrians reside in a world of light, but have at times, stepped outside it, illuminating the way in the darkness, in the Mists that connect everything. The first to do this was Lord Odran, for what purpose remains unknown, and all that he discovered in his journeys, likewise; yet that he managed to reach the Rift suggests he managed to elude coming into contact with the more malevolent forces that reside within. Perhaps it was luck, perhaps he was wise enough to listen to the rumours of others, or perhaps, they did not yet wish to be found.

The Demons

"When a strong malignant force chokes the lands it becomes a breeding ground for demons."

-Raukus, forgotten in the Gate of Anguish



Of these, the most natural may be the demons, aberrations of the Mists that are derivative of the Mists themselves, that is to say, made from the Mists themselves. As a result, their forms vary radically, from humanoid shapes to centaurian shapes, to inhuman abominations. Some would say they thrive on chaos, and while true, it is more the results of the havoc they dream of. Being of the Mists, there is, it would seem, no structure, no form, no rules, no ethics, it is but a perpetual state of conflict, and to civilized peoples, this would be evil. Thus it is to these demons that civilized men are wretched, to be hated, and the characteristics of their world visited upon them, which is to say, the powerful oppress or devour the meek, and suffering and despair are but normality.

Nevertheless, their hatred for Tyria's denizens, or any real world's, cannot be the only attributable cause for their desire to emerge from the Mists and bring harm upon them. No, similar to any creature, they hunger, and their hunger is horrific to any intelligent creature, as it is their very soul. Whether this is a necessity, as food is to any Tyrian, is difficult to say, and even if it was, it would not make it any more comforting.



Yet perhaps the most important factor has been nearly overlooked, and that is the intelligence of these creatures. An appropriate adage for them would be to not judge a tome by its cover, as despite their appearances, they are known to be extremely intelligent, never missing a chance to strike a deal that will permit them to bring their world's lessons crashing down upon the structured principles of civilized men. And is this trait that ties them into the plot of the defiant trio that attempted to bring about Nightfall, of the forces of Menzies, Dhuum, and the most illustrious Abaddon.

The Forces of the Defiant Trio

Intriguingly, we know more of these demons than two of the trio's own forces. Menzies' are the Shadow Army, who assault Balthazar's Eternals in the Fissure of Woe and occupy Ravenheart Gloom in the Domain of Anguish, within the Realm of Torment, where the meeting of these different forces takes place. However, Menzies' participation in Nightfall is not his first direct act of revolt against the entire pantheon of gods. Albeit originally unclear who orchestrated the attack on the Hall of Heroes and corruption of the Tomb of the Primeval Kings, it became clear that Menzies sent three of his higher ranking forces, the Darknesses, to lead a mixture of Dhuum's followers and demons to seize control of the Hall.

Of Dhuum's forces, we only know that the Skeletons of Dhuum, Banished Dream Riders, Grasping Darknesses, and Terrorweb Dryders are truly connected to him. The Emissary of Dhuum appears as a demon, and thus it is unclear whether there are certain demons that actually follow Dhuum, or whether they are only temporarily allying themselves with him for their own purposes, as is likely the case with many of the demons found supporting this trio. Aside from this, it is well known that Dhuum's forces are an essential component in the trio's plans, as his dryders are what maintain the Soulweir, seemingly through their absorption of souls. This ability is also significant for, if not the demons, then at least Abaddon's own forces, which also feed off of souls, and even if the Soulweir is not being maintained through the dryder's absorption of souls, then their power to contain and divert souls to other regions of the Realm of Torment certainly is.

By Gmr Leon

Demonic Armies

Thus bringing us to Abaddon's followers, who are the only group that come close to the demons in terms of what we know of them. Previously human, these devout seafarers went to great extremes in their expression of piety, desecrating temples of the gods, and other material that has long been tread over. Instead of punishing them, or telling them otherwise, Abaddon blessed them with great power, which transformed the people completely, and while they stood by him as he faced the gods, they could not, even with his blessing, prevent his fall into the Realm of Torment. Over the centuries, the Margonites would find that this blessing was not so much a blessing, yes, they were immortal, unaging, and powerful, but they could no longer reproduce. This inability to reproduce meant that they suf fered the same fate as the god they had so zealously fought for, extinction, elimination should they be crushed further.



Despite this, many Margonites still stood by Abaddon, and any that remain may still refuse to acknowledge his defeat. It is difficult to say whether the Margonites should be counted amongst demons, though, as mentioned above, they are noted to consume souls, but many of the Margonites encountered are likely to be the originally transformed Margonites, and whether they were transformed into what we see, or that is the effect of the countless centuries upon them, is difficult to decide. Varesh, our only real example of a transitioning Margonite, does not take on the form of the Margonites we see until she falls and is brought back by Abaddon. This may be an expedited transformation by Abaddon, as one final attempt to keep the heroes at bay, but we cannot say without any certainty.

Regardless of this, these but make up the surface of those dark forces that inhabit the Mists, for the Ravenheart Gloom is said even to lead into places more dangerous, more ominous than the Realm of Torment, which is undoubtedly the most gruesome place within the Mists we have had the opportunity to visit. Remember this, the next time you stroll through the Realm of Torment, or find yourself in the Spawning Pools of the Underworld, we have yet to plunge into the depths of true madness, of true depravity.

A charr, a norn and an asura enter a bar...
As the charr and the norn aproach the bartender:
Bartender: "Hey where is your friend, the asura?"
Charr: "Oh, he's here..."
Asura: "Hiya, mr. bartender."
Bartender: "By the gods, where'd that come from?!"
Norn: "It's some asura mobile device, it let's him be in-game but offline, or offline but in-game"
Charr: "Which exactly, we haven't figured out yet, but he's here..."
Norn: "So three beer please."
Bartender: "But, how is he going to drink it, he's not even physically here?!"

By Gmr Leon

Follow-up interview with Colin Johanson

Last issue you could've read how unlucky we were at GamesCom, starting with problems at the front of the business area to an empty battery of our camera. Though within all these troubles Colin Johanson was kind enough to participate in another interview via email. In this interview we asked all the other questions that we had during GamesCom, including some of your own, which you could've send to us via email before GamesCom. Have fun reading!

GuildMag: How does the side-kicking work when a lower level player is playing with a higher level player in a high level area? Can you give us specific examples?

Colin Johanson: We don't have all the specifics for how exactly the UI will work and what not, but the basic simple answer is the high level player can give the low level player the option to side kick up to their level, if they accept they will jump up to the level of that character. We'll talk more about side kicking and all the specific details more down the road.

GuildMag: How does the side-kicking work when a higher level player is playing with a lower level player in a lower level area? Can you give us specific examples?

Colin Johanson: Much the same, we're still working out all the final details on this, but conceptually the idea is the low level player can offer the high level player to side kick down to their level, if they accept they jump down. Also, if the high level player starts killing low level stuff in the area and griefing other players, they'll be auto side-kicked down to the level of the map to make them less able to grief others with the added bonus they can experience the content there and enjoy it.

GuildMag: The demo had vendors that sold ingredients. Does that mean there will be crafting in the form of cooking in the game? Perhaps you could tell us some more about crafting?

Colin Johanson: The crafting ingredients we threw in for the demo were just sort of a teaser to let people know, "hey someday there will be crafting done here!", once we have all the specifics of the crafting system worked out and fully functioning in-game, we'll reveal a lot more information about it.

GuildMag: In the Ranger demo, you revealed that Caudecus' mansion was a dungeon. What can you guys tell us about dungeons? We know dungeons are 5-man teams, so what makes dungeons harder than the persistent content?

Colin Johanson: Dungeons are basically our highly organized group PvE content. They come in two modes, there is the story mode which helps tell one of the major stories of the world and also progresses the story of the iconic NPCs from Destiny's Edge: Rytlock, Caithe, Logan, Zojja and Eir. Then after you have defeated the story mode, you can access the repeatable mode which is a more difficult repeatable dungeon, effectively our version of raids in Guild Wars 2. Both story and repeatable versions of dungeons are played using 5-man teams, though you can take them on with less people if you're feeling especially bad-ass. In the repeatable mode, the dungeon will present you with choices and decisions that can branch and change the content you experience, so you can play through the dungeon slightly different each time instead of having to experience the same content over and over again. The story dungeon in Caudecus' manor is really a cool one, you show up in time for a party for all the rich and nobility from the city and need to deal with a mystery that is dangerously unraveling in the background of the party while navigating the political whirlwind of the rich and famous of Kryta. As a result of the things you do in the story dungeon, you'll be able to discover a secret part of the manor and will explore and discover new things there while in repeatable mode.

As for what makes dungeons harder, they are specifically tuned in difficulty so they are balanced to be harder than normal content. The monsters use more advanced skills and builds, coordinate together, come in larger numbers, and have elite versions of normal monsters that can be more difficult to contend with. There are a number of lesser bosses with various abilities and skills you need to overcome, and mega-bosses that are extremely difficult highly coordinated battles that push the skills of your group. In particular, repeatable mode is designed to be the hardest content you encounter in Guild Wars 2, and the highest level dungeon repeatable content should provide exciting and fun challenges for player groups long after the release of the game.

GuildMag: On the Ghosts of Ascalon map there are a few islands called: "The Dominion of Winds," near Lion's Arch. What's the importance of these islands? (If you don't want to spoil the book, what's the importance of these islands in the game?)

Colin Johanson: Someday….we will explain all of this. I can say as with anything in Guild Wars 2, it's awesome to hear Jeff Grubb or Ree Soesbee tell a story about it. I also can say in the initial release of Guild Wars 2, you will not be able to visit this location…however you will be able to learn some details about what is there and interact with some of the people who live there.

By Dutch Sunshine

Follow-up interview with Colin Johanson

GuildMag: Could you perhaps ask Izzie to give us some more details on the bonus system for armors and weapons (so far we only know about the Crests for light armor).

Colin Johanson: Afraid Izzy is WAY too busy right now conquering mountains of skills (and preparing to fly to France for the Paris game show!) but I'm sure when he has more time, he'll come back and go into more details on Crests.

GuildMag: Is there anything else that you perhaps want to share with our GuildMag readers?

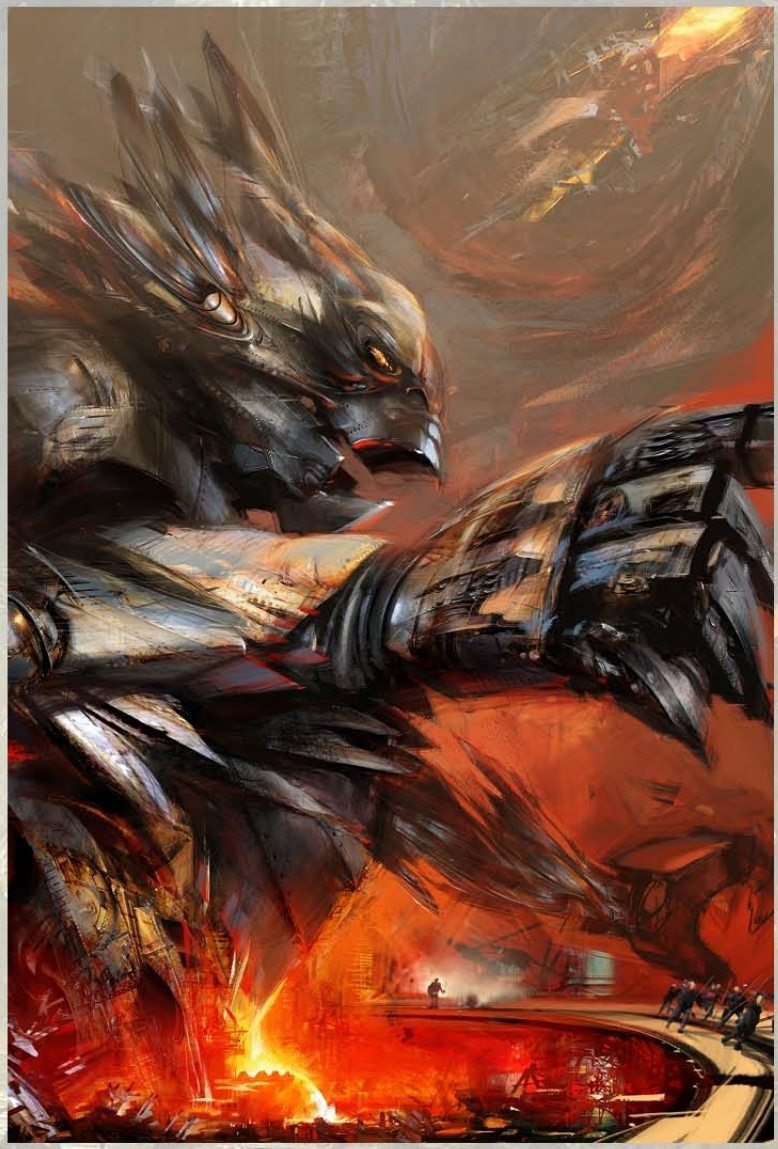
Colin Johanson: I'd love to share that we've been playing a lot of PvP here at the office lately and though it's still early and we have a lot of work to do, it's an absolute freaking blast to play! For the PvP fans out there, I think you're going to be thrilled with the quality of game-play being produced, how much fun the combat system is in a PvP environment and how much tactics and emergent game-play there is to be found in Guild Wars 2 PvP.

GuildMag: Do your family and friends fully understand what your job entails? How do you explain to people what you do for a living? (Old folks hardly understand the extended work that goes into a game).

Colin Johanson: HAH! Now that is a great question. Most of my friends totally understand what we do here at ArenaNet, though pretty much all of them play video games too so I think it's easy for them to understand, to them the content design team is "the dudes and ladies who put turtles down that mario gets to jump on." Some of my family understands, but for most of them I think they don't really have any idea what in the world we do here at ArenaNet or what a "Guild Wars" is. I often times find it easier to explain what we do in relation to TV series or movies, and to explain that we basically write the scripts for the stories of what you're going to experience and then come up with all the characters that the hero of the movie is going to interact with over the course of the movie. They tend to understand that a little bit better, though I think a lot of the head nodding is so we can get on to the next subject as fast as possible. The slightly glazed over look I get sometimes when trying to explain it is probably similar to the look on my face when my mom tries to explain to me why collecting antiques is interesting.

GuildMag: What's your favorite pizza?

Colin Johanson: I'm a big fan of Fennel sausage and cherry peppers on my pizza, there is an awesome pizza place in downtown Seattle called "Serious Pie" that makes some of the best pizza I've ever had in my life, their sausage and peppers pizza is top notch. If you're ever in Seattle, I highly recommend checking this place out.



Better watch your head when this guy's around!

By Dutch Sunshine

Follow-up interview with Colin Johanson

GuildMag: The convention season is (almost) over, but what has been your best experience?

Colin Johanson: I've had two favorite experiences that tie for my over-all #1, picking between them is basically impossible, I've been in the game industry nearly 14 years now and these are two of my all time favorite experiences period.

The first occurred at PAX, where we hosted a panel with a number of our most dedicated fans to design an event chain that would go live in the final Guild Wars 2 game. Going into it, Eric, Jeff and I were thinking maybe we'd come up with like 2-3 events with the help of the fans and to be totally honest, we were slightly nervous we'd end up coming up with some crazy event chain that may not really work for the game. What we didn't realize is we were about to have one of the flat out most fun, exciting and entertaining experiences ever! We managed to come up with like 9 events over the course of the hour and a half, folks shouted out all sorts of fantastic and crazy ideas that we melded together into a wonderful dynamic event chain experience. The fans were wonderful, my face hurt from laughing so hard over the course of the panel. It was just a wonderful experience and something I'll cherish for the rest of my career.





The second experience which ties for #1 for me goes back about a year ago, when a young lady named Emily came to visit us here at ArenaNet through the Make A Wish Foundation. Emily's wish was to get to spend a day here at ArenaNet and see what it was like to part of the games design team. Little did she know, she was going to be the very first person outside of ArenaNet to *ever* play Guild Wars 2, and she got to work with all of us to design out an event chain down to the smallest details including the names of the characters and their personalities that will show up in the game on launch. This day was absolutely incredible, Emily is a charming, brilliant and hilarious person and she really won us all over immediately, even when she told me she wasn't a huge fan of the Tihark Orchard mission I built in Nightfall I still couldn't stop smiling!

We've managed to stay in touch with Emily over the course of the last year and when we announced that we were going to be attending the New York City Comicon, we got a surprise email from her saying she was going to make it out to come see the game. Getting to see Emily and her amazing parents Bob and Deb again out in New York made the entire trip incredibly special, and seeing her play the game again a year later and enjoy it as much as she did was just amazing. As long as I live I'll never forget how much fun I had getting to spend an hour or two talking with her and her parents as she got to play the game. I think it's easy for game developers to get caught up in sales units, marketing pitches, game mechanics and forum trolls but moments like the time we got to spend with Emily helps ground you and make you remember at the end of the day what we do is all about building something that helps make people happy. Seeing the smile on her face and how much fun she had reminded me of why I really make video games and will always be one of my best experiences in the industry.

By Dutch Sunshine

Ghosts of Ascalon - Review

Voracious wouldn't be the right adjective if I used it to describe how I read through Ghosts of Ascalon, the new book from the good folks at ArenaNet, meant to be fully canon to the in-game lore. In fact, I don't think that any adjective could describe the range of emotions I went through as I consumed the book. Perhaps it's a spur of innate fan instincts flowing up like a tidal wave or perhaps it's just overflowing surprise when I found it at my doorstep, but in the end it fulfilled all that eagerness and left me haunted and wanting more. Of course, due to the nature of the contents I wouldn't want to spoil any part of it for people who haven't had a chance to read it yet, but I do want to go into an analysis of what it gives us and maybe a little more.

Perhaps the most interesting part about the book series is that ArenaNet promises it to be all canon to the in-game lore. I can't think of another company that does both at the same time, but ArenaNet is doing it and it looks like it's going great. On the other hand, this may not be a surprise to many of us or the few that actually sit around to see the credits roll by after slaying Shiro or apotheosizing Kormir. Many of the employees at ArenaNet are quite fluent in the realm of literature, and have written quite a handful of stories as well as books. The one group that I suspect wouldn't even be surprised at all, is our beloved Guild Wars lore community who I suspect has a 'Seer' held captive that divulges the future.

So the question is, what might you be getting yourself into when you pick up this book? A good one-word summary is "Growth." We are not only getting a new game, but from the looks of it, a new world. One can really tell that more than two hundred years have passed in Tyria. In a way it kind of feels like the game we play now is just an innocent child compared to things to come. In turn, that childhood innocence may be washed away to what may seem like the cruelty of what reality may really be. To me, Ghosts of Ascalon, really reflects that feeling, and it feels like so much has transitioned and that we're not going to see anything that we've ever known.

On the other side of doom-saying, ArenaNet is still doing a good job of keeping a lot of the game a secret, even from the book front. A better reader may be able to pick apart each section of the book better then I, but it still iterates a lot that we already know. Then again, the original purpose of the book was not only to create and introduce lore, but also introduce the game to people who aren't fanatically refreshing the page to ArenaNet's blog, or the Guild Wars 2 official website. Starting from here though, I'm going to have to be a little mean.
The book feels like a cinematic experience, but I'm not talking about the good kind. At some points it is perfectly balanced, but at other points it reads as if it is stuffed in, like a moa bird trying to swallow a siege turtle. It is just jam-packed with history and references, and I think it could do better with a little less. Then again, I could see the whole entire story dismantled if it wasn't for all that was presented. Nevertheless parts of the story feel really forced, especially on the reference front. These points are still cool, but they feel very artificial and you can sense that they're fishing for a fan-squeal. (Which, by the way, I did, and apparently loud enough to interrupt a phone call a few rooms away.) The action is represented very nicely and coincides with the plot, though again it feels like the moa bird is still going despite its small jaw. What I do appreciate though, is the sense of realness that I get from the book. Though very dramatic at times, there's a sense of not only seriousness but attention to detail that makes the book feel very real. This is not only captivating, but draws you further into the story, and I hope it is repeated in later publications.

Another one of the key purposes of the book was to introduce all the playable races so that people have a better feel for them and that's really what they do in the book. This purpose though is presented in a way that seemed to trump other factors that could have played a bigger part instead. Now what I've heard from people invested in the book sector is that you try your best to keep your primary characters low so that there is less interference. The book feels so focused on introducing the races that but still keeps with the low primary character count in a way that it feels like at points certain characters just completely drop from the story. They're great characters, and I in no way doubt their ability to introduce what it means to be a member of the race they belong to, but this felt quite bloated despite it untangling as the story progresses. Despite that, these are very convincing characters with well established motives, and realistic traits that readers can relate to.



The Ascalon catacombs and the foefire

By MintyMint and GuildMag teammembers

Ghosts of Ascalon - Review

Ghosts of Ascalon is a good beginning for whatever is to come. Now it's not the greatest work of fiction to hit the shelves of fantasy and fiction, but it's enough. A new age dawns for sure, the elder dragons have really changed Tyria, and it shows in a way that we as receivers of a story can never imagine. Guild Wars is growing up, it's sad in a way, but it is also very real. True enough to what would really happen if Tyria was real and not a world of fiction. In a cliché way, as fans and new players alike we'll really be challenged and our delusions shattered, much like the tide that took Lion's Arch or even the devastation of the Foefire.

Since Ghosts of Ascalon has been out for a while now and a lot more of us have had the chance to read it, the GuildMag team also wanted to give their own opinions on the first Guild Wars novel.

Daelin Dwin - Writer

Ghosts of Ascalon was a lot better than I expected. Unlike movies based on games, books based on games are usually a lot better at capturing the feel of the world the game is based in. I don't usually read novels (GoA is the first book I have bought in about six years) but I couldn't put Ghosts of Ascalon down. It was very refreshing to see the Guild Wars universe we know and love in a mature and realistic way. However, I was mildly shocked at some of the more graphic descriptions, as I thought the book would follow the game's teen rating. So if you're a fan of Guild Wars lore and haven't picked up Ghosts of Ascalon yet then, erm... you probably should!

Daelin Dwin's rating 8/10

Konig Des Todes - Writer

I don't think I can accurately state what I was expecting when I first heard of the book. I was excited for more information on my favorite part of the game (the lore), but I've been very well aware of how most books based on games tend to be. I had mixed feelings I suppose. I can say I was excited when I finally got it in my hands (mainly due to getting it a couple days before its official release thanks to Barnes and Nobles). I read through the book faster than any other book I've read. My small fears of how it could be a poorly written book melted away when I got through the first four chapters, because the book did something that has never happened before: It surprised me. For the first time in all the hundreds of books, games, shows and movies that I've read, played and seen, I was surprised by the plot - though the surprises didn't last through the final few chapters.

That was the first enjoyment I had in reading the book, and because of that, I couldn't let the book stay down for more than twenty minutes. Excluding the very few mistakes that I saw (and no book is without mistakes, unfortunately), I have nothing bad to say about the book. It was enjoyable in both the plot and the view on the universe I already know.

The end could have been better, due to the quick nature of it just suddenly ending, but anything that I could think of for being added would probably be viewed as boring by many readers.

All in all, as Daelin said, if you enjoy Guild Wars lore, you should buy the book.

Konig Des Todes' rating 8.5/10

Free Runner - Writer

I didnt really have any expectations of Ghosts of Ascalon. I didnt think it was going to be a horrible book but neither did i think it would be a great book, having had previous experiences with novels based on games. So when I read it I was surprised to find I was enjoying it a lot. One thing that stood out to me was the sylvari character Killeen - this was our first actual look at what a sylvari is like. We've heard about them in interviews and seen Caithe and the others in the trailers, but we had yet to have actually learned what they are like firsthand. So Killeen was to be our first impression of a Sylvari and she didn't disappoint, becoming for me one of the most likeable characters in the book. The book itself was well written, it stuck to the lore of Guild Wars very well, though at times it felt like it was keeping to the lore too well. Sometimes it felt like it was jumping from one recap of Tyria to another, which would be my only complaint.

Overall if you enjoy the stories in Guild Wars and are looking to get Guild Wars 2, then Ghosts of Ascalon is a must buy. If you've never played Guild Wars but are planning to get Guild Wars 2, then definitely buy it. You'll have a hard time deciding what race you're going to play by the end of it.

Free Runner's rating 8/10

Draxynnic - Writer

I have a tendency to keep my expectations low when starting a book that's set in a game world - as a rule, they tend to be lower in quality and complexity than the novels I usually read, whether because most are written by authers breaking into the market or because it's simply a sacrifice that has to be made to keep them accessible to all (or at least most) of

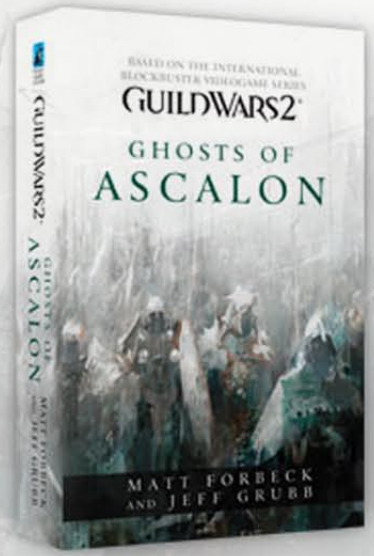
By MintyMint and GuildMag teammembers

Ghosts of Ascalon - Review

For those who are reading the book for its lore, it does provide some insights into the cultures and societies of each of the five races, especially in that it gives us our first real glimpse of the sylvari, as well as showing the current state of human and charr civilizations. At times, though, this lead me to a feeling of contrivance from a narrative perspective, as there are events that seem as if they occurred simply in order to showcase some piece of the world's cultural background.

Otherwise, my largest criticism is possibly on how the book ended - where I would normally expect an epilogue or a "To be continued" (or both) the book jumps pretty much straight from the climax to the author biographies in under five pages, which gave me a bit of a "what, that's it?" response - akin to how a reader might feel if, on reading the final volume of Lord of the Rings, the story had come to a close immediately after the destruction of the Ring.

Draxynnic's Rating- 7/10



JONNY10 - DESIGNER

I'm not much of a reader, heck I've only read books for book reports in high school (I blame the lack of interest). But Ghosts of Ascalon interested me as a self-respecting Guild Wars geek. The main characters in the book are really what you'd expect of someone from their race. A norn is proud, battle ready. A sylvari is unexperienced, fascinated. A charr is ferocious, honorable. My favorite character has to be KIlleen, she constantly reminded me of Luna from the Harry Potter series.

As I mentioned earlier, I'm not much of a reader so I don't have a lot of comparison material. However, you don't have to be familiar with literature to notice some bad writing. There were parts of the book (only a few) that were written in a kind of juvenile way (and then, and then, and then). It doesn't ruin the whole experience though, you'll only encounter it a few times, but it is worth mentioning. I also came across a lot of words I have never heard of before like apex, grandsires, desiccate, erratic, eldritch and of course all those terms the asura shouts out to show off it's intelligence. English isn't my native language so that's to blame. Hopefully that gives some indication of the level of English proficiency required to read this book.

Ghosts of Ascalon is an excellent book for any Guild Wars player looking for background lore and cultural insights. If you want to enrich your Guild Wars 2 experience you'll definitely want to pick this up. It has been said that it will be possible to visit some locations and characters from the book in the game. I'm looking forward to that.

Jonny's rating: 9/10

DUTCH SUNSHINE - PROJECT-LEAD

Like Jonny in the review above, I'm not really much of a reader. I read most books that feel interesting to me, and tend to stick to a specific series before moving on to the next. Ghosts of Ascalon, however, was a surprisingly pleasant read and I've got to admit that I did not notice the repeating writing style as much as the others have mentioned. Even for a foreign reader the story was easy to follow and I was tempted to read through it all in one go. There was a good balance between cliffhangers at the end of a chapter and pauses, which made it easy to put down if you wanted to do something else.

As for the story itself, having read the preview before my book finally arrived at my bookstore, I was really anxious how it continued. Though the beginning did set a good profile for the main-characters, Dougal and Killeen, and also introduced a few stories that would end up having some relevance in the rest of the overall story, I felt there was not really that

By MintyMint and GuildMag teammembers

Ghosts of Ascalon - Review

much importance to the overall story of obtaining the Claw. And while the twist in the plot was kind of predictable, I felt it was just right. Though the overall story turned out to be decent, I believe the book looked back a bit too much to events that happened exactly at the time the orginal Guild Wars played and was kind of relucant to mention many things that happened in between (aside of a detailed description of the Foefire).

For any readers that like fantasy, or want to read a decent book about Guild Wars, I do recommend reading this one, as it feels like the writers did their best to tend to both groups. A newcomer to the universe of Guild Wars would still have a good read when reading.

Dutch Sunshine's Rating- 7.5/10

Thalador Doomspeaker - Writer

Ghost of Ascalon was the book I couldn't put down (the two reasons for putting it down eventually were the need to sleep and to check guildwars2.com and guildwars2guru.com for possible new Guild Wars 2 information). I was crazed when I could finally lay my hands on the book. On the first afternoon (3-4 hours of reading) I read about one third of the whole book and then continued on after having lunch. I hope these weird pictures of my life help you imagine how much I liked the book.

Ghost of Ascalon helped me in seeing a Tyria that is 250 years in the future. People's attitudes in those dragon-haunted days, the mentioned changes in the environment and interesting lore facts that we didn't know before. One of my favorite parts will always be Almorra Soulkeeper's record of the day when Kralkatorrik awoke and flew south towards the Crystal Desert. A thrill went through my body when I read the line which told how the Elder Crystal Dragon had blocked the light of the sun with its size, and the horrible effects that followed its crossing.

The book showed the main characters in a very positive way. At first, I disliked that all of them (with the possible exception of Dougal) reflected their respective races' attitudes, stereotypes, strengths and weaknesses. However, as the story went on their characteristics changed a lot as well. Gullik's guilt, the heroic charge of Kranxx (darn, he was the only asura that grew up to my heart, actually) and the comradeship and friendly behaviour that Ember Doomforge showed to the group near the end of the book.

Average rating 8,1/10

All in all, it was an excellent book. I loved every part of it. Those who love fantasy should check this out, and those who hate fantasy should really check this out, as it may change their attitude towards the genre. And of course, I recommend it to every fellow lover of GW lore as well. By Wolf's Teeth, what a marvellous read it was!

Thalador Doomspeaker's Rating 9/10

In the end, the average rating was 8.1/10, meaning that we think it's worth checking out for any guild wars or guild wars 2 fan.



The Dragonbrand

By MintyMint and GuildMag teammembers

The Dead and Undead

The dead in Tyria are still an important aspect of living. Many are sorrowful for the dead, as they are dead, and many more revere the dead (especially in Cantha). I do not believe that the deceased – recent or not – would ever become an unimportant aspect of life. Not only are they revered and there is constant sorrow around them, but they also prove to be a constant reminder.

I do not mean that they are a reminder that no living being can escape death, nor do I mean that they are a reminder that there are threats – natural and unnatural – to this world. Rather, I mean that the dead serve to remind us that not everything in life will be understood (to some, that is – I have every intention to learn everything, no matter how long it takes).

The dead can take many forms – from the simplistic, lifeless corpse, to a spirit (both kind, but in agony or one of malice), to a grand celestial, to an undead, a mere reminder that is revered and exists on Tyria only as a thought. I'll leave the second and third to another day, and there isn't much to talk about mere corpses.

Canthans and Ancestors

An interesting development that had occurred in Cantha that is missing almost everywhere else is the grand reverence of the dead. Whether this aspect was created by the ritualist profession (that I am a part of) or vice versa is still a mystery; one probably could attempt to summon a spirit from the time before the ritualist was around to see the answer, but either no one has attempted such, or no one has succeeded.

There are two widely known situations where ancestors are revered: Tahnnakai Temple and the Kurzick people. While the entire nation of Cantha – including both Kurzicks and Luxons – are very much devout in their reverence of ancestors (and in turn, the god of death), these two are the most commonly seen situations.

Tahnnakai Temple is a grand temple within Kaineng City that houses a simple eight heroes – one of each of the Canthan heroic professions (assassin, elementalist, mesmer, monk, necromancer, ranger, ritualist and warrior). If a hero has recently died and the hero's spirit ends up residing within Tahnnakai Temple, then the spirit of the previous hero of the same profession will move on. Most recent case of this being Togo of Shing Jea Monastery replacing Kaolai.

Though this doesn't happen often, as it takes a large effort to gain a place there.

The Kurzicks are a different matter entirely. While their great houses each have a patron saint – or ancestor – much like how Tahnnakai Temple has a "patron spirit" of each profession, the Kurzicks as a whole revere each ancestor.

This is most evident in House Durheim who are best known for their love of history – both of Kurzicks and of Canthans. Their reverence with the past possibly knows no bounds, and they study genealogy with a passion. They even are said to be blessed by Grenth with the magical ability to chronicle the life of every Kurzick ever born. Whether this is true or not, however, is questionable.

The Undead



The undead are greatly misjudged creatures. Due to the common undead known to many as a "minion," a grand misconception has been formed. This misconception is that all undead are mindless piles of flesh and bone. This is not the case, and the normal undead, though not the average, are far from mindless beings.

Much like the Shiro'ken of Shiro Tagachi's army, the undead which are shown to have wills of their own, which fight alongside souls enslaved to a greater power (specifically, a kind of undead called a lich), are likely to be mobile due to entrapped souls. It should be noted that, despite both undead and Shiro'ken having souls, the Shiro'ken do not always seem to have a will of their own - due to Shiro Tagachi's former envoy powers.

Undead who have minds of their own will not always have their own wills – or rather, they are forced to follow their leader whether they want to or not. The most commonly known situation of this would be with Palawa Joko and his undead army. Known to enslave both undead and souls, though only when active among them (as many of his followers deserted him when he was imprisoned by Turai Ossa), he would have an ample supply of souls to enslave within bodies.



By Konig Des Todes

The Dead and Undead

Most people believe that they suffer if they ever became an undead. What these ignorant people don't realize is that this would only be true if their soul was used. Otherwise it would just be a husk that once served as your body that would be used. The original owner of the body wouldn't feel a thing.



There is a unique kind of undead among those which have a mind and will of its own. These are referred to as liches, and there are only a reporting of three such undead: Vizier Khilbron, Palawa Joko, and Zoldark the Unholy. Zoldark is further unique in this group for he lacks something that Joko and Khilbron, annoyingly to their enemies, have: the ability to survive most deaths.

When Joko was defeated, Turai and his Order of Whispers attempted to slay him in many, unrecorded, ways. When he wouldn't die, he was imprisoned. Khilbron was killed, but it had to be done in a certain way. As a lich, he wouldn't die unless he stood ontop of a nearby bloodstone – which was connected to various soul batteries, which harnessed the souls of those killed on top of the bloodstone. This proves that Khilbron had a soul (and further supports that undead with minds of their own have souls as well), and that the soul had to literally be ripped out of the body by force in order to slay the lich.

If the situation with Khilbron is commonplace for liches, then that would mean that what designates an undead as a "lich" would be someone who has its soul tied to its body, and that tie must be broken before it can truly die. This is further supported by a unique Shiro'ken that roams the Realm of Torment: The Hunter. The Hunter, created by Shiro Tagachi, was empowered by Khilbron's magic and in turn was made to be what some would call "immortal" – much like Khilbron himself. A Shiro'ken is not an undead, so what allows this "immortality" would be something tied with the soul itself, or the magic – both of which are the sole common factors.

Zoldark the Unholy is unique in this aspect because, despite having been called a lich, he is supposedly dead and gone, without any special means in killing him. But there's a second attribute which makes him unique: he was capable of resurrecting his servants at a distance far greater than any magic known today. This could have been due to his age, and having access to ancient magic, or it could be tied to his lich-hood, as his undead servants act much like one would expect from a lich and his powers of self-survival. Upon Zoldark's death, however, all of his servants would instantly die, proving that their powers and survival was linked to his.

What does this mean? Are there two kinds of liches? That's the most likely explanation. Or perhaps Zoldark was merely faking his death, waiting for his would-be killers to loot the place and leave…

-Journal of Xaphan Sariel, Researcher and Lorekeeper of Kurzick House Sariel

Chibi by Izari





By Konig Des Todes

On The Tube with Daelin Dwin: Halloween edition

Welcome to the fourth edition of 'On the Tube with Daelin Dwin', where I search high and low for the best Guild Wars YouTube videos and channels.

Halloween is on the way,
So here I come, on this day.
To show you vids from near and far,
And give you chills to freeze your car.

Gather round now and click links 'a plenty,
Get your scares right now, don't do so gently.
On the night of-

Enough of that! Welcome to the Halloween special of On the Tube.
This issue I have four of the spookiest, creepiest and scariest Guild Wars videos you will ever lay your eyes on.



Guild Wars Halloween Event 2009

A terrifying account of the events of last years Halloween celebrations.



by Gunvengeur

The King and Queens Horrorween 2009

A spooky intro/advert for Queen Malafide and Daniel Frozenwind's 2009 Horroween event.



by Imaculata

Guild Wars Halloween Review 2009 (Part 1)

A horrifying review of the halloween celebrations in Guild Wars.



by Dooombox

Guild Wars Halloween Review 2009 (Part 2)

A blood-curdling continuation of the previous video.



by Dooombox

Now that you are all sufficiently scared, it's time to end the festival of frights for this issue. If you think there is a video or channel that should be featured here, feel free to e-mail me at onthetube@guildmag.com or private message me on youtube at http://www.youtube.com/daelindwin.

By Daelin Dwin

Dhuum and the Underworld

I will tell you a dark secret nearly as old as the Underworld itself. Long have the bards sung of Grenth's defeat of Dhuum, the former ruler of the Underworld. With the help of the rebellious Reapers, Grenth usurped Dhuum's throne. But the books and songs only tell part of the tale. You see, Dhuum was not fully destroyed; Grenth was simply not powerful enough to slay him. Instead, he forced Dhuum into a state of dormancy and imprisoned him within the Hall of Judgment, trapped behind massive enchanted doors and layers of divine magic. There Dhuum remained, slumbering... waiting. Until now.

-King Frozenwind, 1078AE

While previously I had planned to move next to a study on Grenth, the imminent anniversary of the return of Mad King Thorn has turned my thoughts towards the adversary of both Grenth and Thorn – the former God of Death, Dhuum, who attempted to break free from his prison nearly a year ago and, rumours say, may soon be making another bid for the freedom to exact vengeance on those he sees as cheating death.

Since the fall of the lich atop the Door of Komalie, treasure hunters and adventurers have ventured into the Underworld in search of a valuable commodity – ectoplasm. Found within the spirits and creatures of the Underworld, this material was essential to the forging of impressive pieces of armor coveted by the rich and powerful in the adventuring community to demonstrate their wealth and status. With even the smallest sample valued many times more highly than a bar of platinum, ectoplasm even came to be viewed as a favored medium for trade in transactions where the weight of platinum required would be impractical.

In search of this wealth, treasure hunters and adventurers flocked to the Underworld in the dozens. Wreathed in protective magics that the denizens of the Underworld found difficult or impossible to counter, these treasure hunters roamed and slew at will, harvesting the precious ectoplasm from the remains and returning it to Tyria to be sold on the open market. While the Reaper of the Chaos Plains warned that Grenth had a dark predecessor who had been cast down by Grenth for his unjust treatment of the dead, none knew then that the deaths in the Underworld were fuelling his power.



Several times, Dhuum's servants have upset the balance of the Underworld, imprisoning the Reapers and imposing their own order of terror on the land of the dead before being cast down by the timely interventions of Tyrian heroes. As Dhuum's power waxed, however, he began to lend his forces towards efforts to release another imprisoned god, Abaddon. What dark bargain these two struck is unknown, but it is likely that Dhuum expected Abaddon to reciprocate once he was freed.

The history of this conflict has been detailed in a previous article, but it suffices to say that Dhuum's armies were broken along with Abaddon's. Many of Tyria's heroes believed Dhuum had been defeated also until, on the leadup to the Mad King's appearance after the fall of the Great Destroyer, the Mad King's Steward appeared in Lion's Arch and Kamadan asking heroes to meet with King Frozenwind in the Hall of Judgement to discuss dark omens that the Mad King had sensed in the Underworld. The King of the Snowmen revealed that Dhuum had been growing in power on the life energy of creatures dying in the Underworld.



A meeting between King Frozenwind and the Reapers confirmed that Dhuum's bindings were weakening and would soon fail entirely. These tidings proved of great concern to the Mad King and his servants, as Dhuum's hostile attitude towards any form of life after death, including resurrection and the state of undeath, was a threat to the Mad King and his existence within the Underworld.

Soon after the meeting, previously unseen creatures known as Skeletons of Dhuum began to appear in the Underworld. Since even the destruction of Dhuum's own servants served to bring him closer to breaking out of imprisonment, the Mad King's Steward devised a means of thinning their numbers without releasing their power to Dhuum. This took the form of the Everlasting Gobstoppers, candy prisons distributed to adventurers that could encapsulate and imprison sufficiently weakened skeletons. This measure, however, only served to delay Dhuum's near escape from the Hall of Judgement.

At first, this incursion appeared just like any other – Dryders, Skeletons, and other minions of Dhuum imprisoning the Reapers and seeking to impose their own order on the Underworld. Just as Dhuum's minions had been pushed back and it looked like order had been restored, however, King Frozenwind brought dire news – the Ender of All himself was on the verge of breaking from the Hall of Judge

By Draxynnic

Dhuum and the Underworld

ment. In response, the heroes joined the Reapers and the King of the Snowmen to seek to push Dhuum back into his prison.

While Dhuum demonstrated many fearsome powers in the battle to break out of his imprisonment, including the ability to summon skeletal retainers and to impose upon his foes the lethargy normally associated with death and a recent resurrection. However, the most dangerous power Dhuum showed was the ability to prevent the use of resurrection skills within his vicinity.

THE TITLES OF DHUUM

While every god has collected a range of titles, Dhuum is perhaps unique in the quantity that he has amassed. Or at least, thanks to the Reaper of the Labyrinth's obsession with listing them whenever the topic of Dhuum comes up, the deity for whom the most titles are known. The full (currently known) list is:

Death Inevitable, The Ender of All, The Mouth at the End of the Void, Omega Death, The Voice in the Void, The Final Judge, Emperor of Oblivion, Master of Nothingness, The Final Death.

FOLLOWERS:

Having been imprisoned for ages, there are no known mortal followers in Tyria. Of course, before 1075 AE, the same could be said for Abaddon, so it is possible that Dhuum also has followers hiding in the mortal realm.

Interestingly, unlike the dryders found in Tyria (which almost universally employ necromancer-like powers), the Tortureweb and Terrorweb Dryders instead wield the power of flame, with a sprinkling of other magics. While most dryders prefer to fight from afar, a new variety of Terrorweb dryder recently appeared to counter one of the strategies employed by adventurers to survive in the Underworld, rapidly shadowstepping towards their victim before unleashing a close-range burst of flame. A few of Dhuum's dryders, the Keepers of Souls, however, do employ necromantic powers in the creation and enchantment of powerful beasts.



Beneath the dryders in the hierarchy of Dhuum's servants are the Grasping Darknesses, which were historically unleashed upon the Labyrinth and the Forgotten Vale to consume the spirits of the dead. Fortunately, while their speed and ability to disrupt spells makes them dangerous to spellcasters, like many soul-eating demons, the souls of their victims are freed when they are destroyed.

Also among Dhuum's forces are the ghostly, mesmeric Dream Riders. While it is unclear if they follow Dhuum (with the exception of the Four Horsemen), those found wandering the Chaos Plains in the Underworld have a link to Mindblade Spectres making them more dangerous than they appear, as the destruction of these riders causes swarms of spectres to mob the slayers. It is unknown whether these spectres are created by the rider's destruction, or simply responding to a distress call.



The Dream Riders found outside the Chaos Plains, however, are clearly in Dhuum's employ, having been seen fighting alongside Dhuum's dryders in the Tomb of Primeval Kings, the attempted disruption of the Dragon Festival on Shing Jea Island, and within the Foundry of Failed Creations in the Domain of Anguish. Fortunately, these Dream Riders do not appear to have the connection to the Mindblade Spectres that their counterparts in the Underworld benefit from.



The third type of creature known to follow Dhuum are the Skeletons of Dhuum, only seen as the moment of Dhuum's breakout approached. It is curious that, given Dhuum's disapproval of undead, these creatures appear similar to undead and share many of their qualities (including a vulnerability to holy magic). It is unknown whether this is because Dhuum makes exceptions for his close followers, or whether the Skeletons are actually demons (or even constructs) that simply happen to resemble undead. Apart from their nature as heralds of Dhuum's escape, the Skeletons of Dhuum are most infamous for their powerful attacks that bypass the defences of their foes, with the only means to avoid being struck being to run well clear of the point of impact. It is possible that the skeletal hound em ployed in an attempt to assassinate one of the Reapers is related in some manner to these skeletons.

By Draxynnic

Dhuum and the Underworld

As well as the skeletal hound, there are a handful of other creatures that, willingly or not, have come to serve Dhuum. While there is nothing to indicate that the Aatxes as a group serve Dhuum rather than just being another threat in the Underworld, some have been known to be harnessed by magic to Keepers of Souls, linking their lives to the Keepers. Furthermore, within the Realm of Torment were sighted a number of Dhuum's ambassadors taking the form of torment demons, suggesting that either Dhuum was able to recruit envoys from the natives of the Realm of Torment, or that some of his followers took their forms to better fit in.

THE UNDERWORLD:

While technically now the domain of Grenth, the status of the Underworld as the site of the battle against Dhuum as well as Dhuum's former domain makes it a logical topic to discuss along with Dhuum, especially if the Ender of All needs to be imprisoned again…

Gaining access to the Underworld with the aid of the Voice of Grenth places a band of adventurers into the Labyrinth, a maze inhabited by powerful, minotaur-like demons called Aatxes. While their blows can smash through leather, steel and enchanted cloth like paper, magic is often effective at reducing the power of their blows to a manageable level.

Three exits are possible from the Labyrinth. West of the post of the Reaper of the Labyrinth is the Forgotten Vale. While the outskirts are inhabited by reptilian creatures wielding powers of ice and stone known as Coldfire and Stalking Nights respectively, the village within is intended as a place of peace for those gentle souls that died without realizing what had happened, although in times of upheaval it is often overrun with demons and more violent spirits.

To the north is the Frozen Wastes, home of King Frozenwind and the lesser ice elementals in Grenth's service. More dangerous within the Wastes are the aforemen



tioned Coldfire Nights and the ghostly Smite Crawlers, phantoms that can turn the power of blows and curses against their foes. Opposite the Labyrinth across the Ice Wastes is the Hall of Judgement, once thought to be Grenth's palace and now known to the Dhuum's holding place.

The southern reaches of the Underworld are reached by crossing the Twin Serpent Mountains, the stones of that land holding within their entwining namesake as either the physical bodies of two brothers that earned Grenth's ire by challenging him for his position… or as an eternal monument to their punishment. Crossing these mountains, and running the gauntlet of rock-hurling Obsidian Behemoths and thunderbolt-wielding Charged Blacknesses will find them in the Chaos Planes.

The former site of Dhuum's tower and throne before being cast down by Grenth, the Chaos Planes have been swept barren by energies released in its destruction, and are now wandered by the spirits of those that were judged to have died without redeeming features. It is unknown whether this is the origin of the Banished Dream Riders or Mindblade Spectres found within the Planes, or whether the spirits here are too insubstantial to be seen or interacted with by mortals.

From the Chaos Planes can be accessed two of the most sinister parts of the Underworld. North of the Planes are the Bone Pits, where the corpses of dead travellers are animated into abominations of bone and sinew that animate any bodies of the fallen they find. The Bone Pits are also the place where souls are cast into a realm of torment, believed by many to be the Realm of Torment, making this the place the gods used to dispose of those "tainted" by knowledge of Abaddon before that dark god's replacement by Kormir – and possibly where Dhuum's forces made their way to Abaddon's side to assist in his push for freedom.

Finally, to the east of the Chaos Planes are the Spawning Pools, bubbling pools of tar that hinder the movements of mortal adventurers and rendering them vulnerable to the fire magic of the Terrorweb Dryders that call this place home. According to the Reaper that watches over the pools, deep within the tar can be found even darker things than the Terrorwebs, horrors that must take physical form before they can visit the nightmares of mortals. However, the parallels between this rumour and the nature of the Domain of Fear in the Realm of Torment imply that this may story may simply be a dim memory of that domain, especially since, apart from the Obsidian Guardians of the Terrorweb Queens and possibly the Skeletons of Dhuum, there is little to indicate the presence of greater evils than the dryders within the pools.

Travellers considering visiting the Underworld are reminded that even with Dhuum returned to the Hall of Judgement, the Underworld remains a dangerous place. Aatxes, spectres, Smite Crawlers, and the Stalking and Coldfire Nights are all highly territorial and need no further provocation than the presence of the living to attack. Since even fighting in self-defence may serve to accelerate Dhuum's next attempt to escape, responsible visitors are requested to seek the sponsorship of powerful personalities in the Underworld such as the Mad King to help avoid any of the potentially lethal unpleasantness that might arise during such travel.

By Draxynnic

Halloween Workshop

This is my entry for
THE HALLOWEEN WORKSHOP

… Is how everybody participating in the workshop submitted their final entries close to the 22nd deadline. The workshop started on September 8th 2010 and we here at GuildMag posted a blog interview with Tzu about this workshop on the 5th of October. During this time the thread in 'Nolani Academy of Art' on guildwarsguru.com grew to a staggering 52 pages of progress art, feedback and general chatter. From what I can tell everybody in the thread enjoyed this workshop, just like last year…

This year the amount of participating artist dwarfed previous years in which this workshop was held. A total of 46 artist joined in the fray, to collectively work on individual entries for the official ArenaNet Halloween Art Contest and to have a chance on winning one of the 14 prizes that come with the workshop itself. The categories for which the Judges of the workshop will pick the winners are:

- Artist Extraordinaire (wins in workshop and official contest);
- Best Overall artist (progress, end piece, thread participation);
- Best Progress (1st, 2nd, 3rd);
- Best Literature (1st, 2nd, 3rd);
- Most Original;
- Most Evil;
- Most Amusing;
- Best 'Mad King Thorn';
- Muse;
- In the Spirit of Halloween;
- T-shirt give out.

When 'we' wrote our blog interview on the 5th we had hopes we could post the winners of most of these categories in this issue, unfortunately IRL issues messed with our planning and we are unable to post the winners in this article, but rest assured, as soon as the winners are known we will post them on our blog.

Which leaves me with the hardest part of this article, giving a non biased impression of the works of art created in this workshop. Which I hope I did by going through the thread and pick out a couple of diverse works of art. If you are in this article it doesn't mean you have a bigger chance of winning, nor a lesser chance, I just picked some works out to show how diverse the entries were and maybe some-one reading this realizes 'I can do that' and joins the workshop next year, the more the merrier…

So ok, maybe this first one is a bit biased, as it is made by the person who organized the workshop, 'our very own' Tzu …



She wasn't the only one with a costume though, as both KiyaKoorena (MadKing costume & Plushy) and Kittycricri (Halloween Ritualist) submitted a costume for the workshop, aswell as the official Contest. Best luck to them, seeing 'Costumes' are a separate category in this years Official Contest they will be going up against eachother. To be honest, I wouldn't want to be in the ArenaNet judge pannel …

By Arghore

Halloween Workshop



Another kind of art was made by Odinius. Who made this very detailed clay 'assembly' and he wasn't the only one creating art with clay, as wbbear29 also made a nice Halloween themed artwork made of clay.

Some other artists made some nice IRL art as well. One very spectacular work by Shady Tradesman was this charr effigy.



It was set ablaze in both charr as well as wicker man tradition, or if you will the result of a well placed 'Mind Burn' spell.

By Arghore

Halloween Workshop

Totally different was this IRL constructed Halloween 'still' with all in game items hand crafted by Artemis Alexandrae.
Which doesn't only look very cool and Halloween/GuildWars inspired but, as the title suggest, rather tasty as well ...



So, what about the more traditional kind of 'Art' I hear you think... No worries, there was more than enough of those. For example this well made render/drawing made by Minami.



Or the scene below made by Operative14, one of those other things that makes your hair raise in your neck, passing a graveyard on your Halloween round...



To finish off a special mention which, has me as well as other artists rather excited, is the special category that was introduced especially for the workshop. The literature prizes, this kind of art is not accepted as an entry for the official ArenaNet contest, but, the workshop gave writers the opportunity to participate in the workshop with their preferred kind of Art, by writing a short Halloween/GuildWars inspired story.

The writers didn't let the Art down, as far as I can tell there are 3 very well written Halloween stories. Which means this year every writer will get a prize, which one though is in the hands of the judges. Next year though, it might be a 'different story' ...
And this was just the tip of the iceberg, like I said 46 artist joined this years' workshop and the quality was high, if you have some spare time while waiting for Mad King Thorn to show up on Sunday, do visit:

http://www.guildwarsguru.com/forum/halloween-workshop-2000k-prize-pot-t10451369.html prize-pot-t10451369.html

By Arghore

The Sylvari

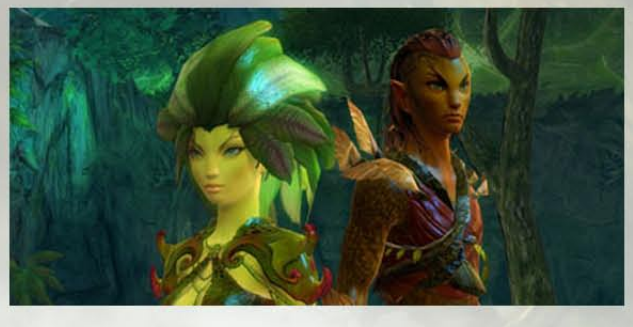
The sylvari are the latest race introduced in the violent world of Tyria. The first generation to be born, known as the firstborn, sprung to life only 25 years earlier than the events of Guild Wars 2.

Seed of life

The creation of the sylvari dates back to over 250 years ago. A centaur named Ventari had enough of the war between the humans and the centaur.During the war between the two races, he left the violence and created his own camp. After some time, as the White Mantle, Shining Blade, and the centaurs fought their war even deeper in the Maguuma Jungle, he fled south to the Tarnished Coast. Along the way he befriended a human named Ronan and together they planted the seed of the Pale Tree. With the planting of the seed they, created The Sanctuary; a place of peace where all races could come and live in harmony. But as with all life, sooner or later it ends.



Before his death, Ventari wrote what is known as the Ventari Tablet. The tablet describes the ways of peace and harmony and the right morals, according to what Ventari thought they were. He then placed the Tablet at the base of the Pale Tree. He died in 1180 AE but his legacy continued. Once the first sylvari's were born they quickly found the Tablet and it had a very profound effect on them. It is



A never ending dream.

The sylvari all are connected through what is known as The Dream of Dreams. Killeen, a sylvari [from the Ghost of Ascalon book] describes it like this:

"In the Dream of Dreams, one grows one's identity. When once Awakened into the world, we leave the Dream behind, for the most part. But what we learn in the world goes back into the Dream to help new Sylvari understand. ... But knowledge is rarely specific. A face, an item, perhaps a name, may stay with us once we Awaken. We may feel drawn to a particular place or person, or feel that some task needs to be done. Occasionally, something in the Dream echoes back to an awakened sylvari, but it is more a feeling than a vision filled with details and specifics."



It means the Sylvari learn about the world through the Dream of Dreams. When they're asleep, they dream about the world and learn from it, but the knowledge they gain is not specific. The ones that are awake can't dream more knowledge, however they do stay connected to the Dream of Dreams. If they learn something new it will be part of the Dream which new Sylvari that are still asleep can learn from. Of-course, within the Dream of Dreams, they also experience Nightmares. While most do not accept these nightmares as a way of life, there are those that do. This group is known as the Nightmare Court. The Nightmare Court rejects the teachings of the Ventari Tablet and embraces the nightmares. Their goal is to corrupt the Pale Tree to their will, twisting it to their evil point of view.

A new world

The sylvari live in the tarnished Coast, and their main capital is known as The Grove. Its location is on the exact spot as the Sanctuary. Despite only being 25 years old, they quickly spread throughout Tyria, learning more and more about the world. While most races accepted them for who they are, the Asura abused their lack of knowledge and for awhile used the sylvari as test subjects for their experiments. But since every sylvari is connected through the Dream, the ones that were born later knew of the Asura and their doings and after a while they were no longer used as test subjects.

They also learned about the human gods and the dragons, however, they do not believe that gods exist until they see it for themselves. The dragons, on the other hand, who are a real threat to world, which also is their start of their creation, they were a response against the dragons.

Though they are not sure yet what their destiny is, since the dream guide them to a ''destiny''. Since they were born from a tree and are very new to the world of Tyria, they craft their armor and weapons from organic materials such as vines and roots. They also have a strong connection with nature. They're even able to manipulate it by making plants grow faster and even bringing it to life to fight alongside the sylvari.

Despite being the latest race in Tyria they already stand strong and their Dream will guide their race to become even greater.



Chibi by Izari

By Asuran

Check out our previous issues!

Issue #1 - The Fires of Tyria



Issue #2 - The Lights of Tyria



Issue #2.5 - War in Kryta Special



Issue #3 - The Waters of Tyria



END OF THE LINE...

CAPTION ATTRACTION!



"Why do I have the feeling I'm being watched?" - Thistle Xandra



Send in the caption for this screen-shot to caption@guildmag.com

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Would you like to see your own work in the next issue?

We're looking for quality stories, lore, fanfiction and art.

Submit your work at:
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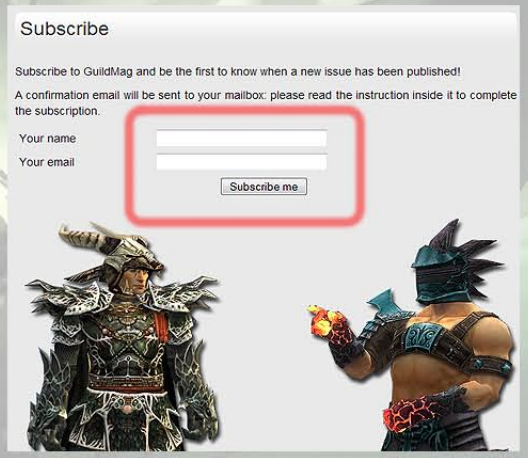
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A charr, a norn and an asura enter a bar...
Bartender: "Is your friend the asura with you again?"
Norn: "Yeah, he is here."
Asura: "!@*&)(*&@#! street lights!!"
Asura: "Great it still works!!"
Charr: "We told him staying stationary would make this easier."
Norn: "But he insists it's a 'mobile' device..."

A charr, a norn and an asura enter a bar...
As a sylvari leaves the bar:
Charr: "What's going on here, some special party?"
Barman: "Nice isn't it? ... We are having a big sylvari party tonight!"
Asura: "Ahh, so that's why he is leaving the bar."



Do you think you are funny? Or maybe you just have a Guild Wars related bar joke? If you can make most of our team laugh, there is a good chance your joke will make it into one of our Issues. So, send your funny stuff to: barjoke@guildmag.com

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