

History of the Southlands

The history of the Southlands is long and complex, as befits a place ancient and strange, deceptive and adaptive. Dynasties and Natural Phenomena, Quarrels and Wars, Strangers and Brothers...

The land has always been divided and separate. As such, it never properly received a name from its inhabitants, who simply call themselves Southerners - as a reminder that the land is no one's home or nationality. Everyone here is a native, yet at the same time a foreigner.

Little is known about the ancient past of the Southlands, beyond its borders with the Fogs and the fact that chaos has always reigned hereher.

The Buried Age

The Buried Age dates back to the first hundred or more years of this place, preceding the reign of the Faded Emperor.

Historians speculate that the earth was then divided into autonomous cities that did not interact.

Some say that this is when the first Abyssal Beasts, the common monsters as we know them today, appeared.

Rumors place the Sancted Ones, Saints as they are better known, first appearing then, hence their names are missing from memory. However, no information has survived since then.

The Faded Emperor

The Faded Emperor appeared after the Buried Century. He was a charismatic conqueror who managed to sweep the entirety of the Southlands with his forces and subjugate them under his yoke.

For a while he was beloved, merciful and just. As the years passed, however, his ambition caused him to seek out new enemies and new lands to force under his rule.

Thus, he was confronted by Trissevgene, the Fae with Three Faces, who ruled at the Mirror of the World. Blinded by desire, the Fallen Emperor bet everything he had against her - and lost. His name, his Lands, the history of his people, and their memories. At a loss and desperate after his defeat, he dove into the Mirror of the World and met his end, or so goes the story. And so the Land was plunged into Oblivion...

A New Beginning

And yet, the world continued to exist, to live and to toil. New Names took the places of the old, new leaders replaced the Faded Emperor, and the South was unified. Cities were built, ships sailed to meet neighboring peoples, guilds were erected in honor of the Sancted Ones.

The **Seamstry**, in honor of the Seamstress, a cooperative of artisans, builders and homesteaders tending to the needs of society.

Soon after the **Shipyard** was established - an association of travelers, diplomats and merchants sharing knowledge of ports and cultures, of maps and seas. Within its

framework, bazaars and markets were gradually set up and the **Shipyard** was transformed into a commercial centre.

Peace and prosperity hailed the South for some time - but that was soon to change.

The Year of the Nightmare

The year 304 was called the Year of the Nightmare, the Rise of the Beast. The emergence of Woe(Alimonos), the primordial Evil, the First Nightmare, the Darkness that lurks.

A lone rider on a white steed appeared before the great cities. Soon, the cities were overrun with monsters and demons. Mankind was losing the battle against the Darkness. The prophets said that no one born upon this land could face this evil.

His name was Yaric. His home was the North, beyond the Fogs. He was called the first Hero - the one who tamed magic. In his world, he was hunted by men with strange devices that could drain his magic. In this new world he came to, he learned the culture of the locals, became kin with them, gained compassion - and the Sancted Champion appeared before him. Yaric stood alone against Woe, who mirrored his fears, bringing into existence out of shadows a strange device - like the one he feared, drying up his magic. Hope had almost vanished.

But the locals did not abandon the foreigner who learned their language. They armed themselves with faith and the magic the stranger brought to their land, and mustered their courage to exorcise the evil with him - a handful of people against Woe.

They were few, yet not one - their fears thousands, but each fear separate. The Nightmare could not face and adapt to each one individually, and so it was defeated by the Light.

Years passed, and the time came when Yaric drew his last breath on this Land. The Spell Book that bore his spells changed hands many times, each time enriched with the hopes and beliefs of its new owner. But through the changes, so too did the nature of Magic itself change, the letters within the text, the very language in which it was written.

Thus was Magic formed in this land, a Magic that could not have otherwise taken form in a world of mirroring and chaos.

The Time of Prosperity

In the following years new Guilds took shape, in the hope of stopping a Woe-like disaster in the future. The **Bastion**, a guild of warriors and generals, mercenaries and explorers, was formed to discuss and analyze strategic defense and the dangers threatening the South.

At the same time, the **Hunt** was established by hunters and magicians, historians and naturalists, to analyze the nature of monsters, their abilities and ways of hunting them, creating a line of defense against them.

The **Seamstry** now opened its doors to Healers as well, making it a place of warmth for the wounded and discussion for the spiritual. Soon the **Athenaeum** was established alongside it, a place where magicians and alchemists could talk about their discoveries or improve their skills.

At the same time, a group of people, deep in thought about the dangers and power of Magic and the lack of control over its use, found the device of Woe, and founded the **Hush**, a secret brotherhood that monitors, controls and cracks down on the rampant use of Magic, and anyone who can be corrupted by its power so that the mistakes of the Faded Emperor are not repeated.

A Shadow in the East

Soon, the Time of Prosperity came to an End, as invaders from the East appeared on the horizon. Bloody naval battles and clashes on land led the **Bastion** to make the decision to go to war, taking all the skilled warriors alongside it to the East. News of these troops was never heard from, and the Eastern raiders never appeared on the horizon again. The Land was filled with simple civilians and fear would reign supreme.

And the Land, mirroring that fear, gave birth to monsters and enemies. Local heroes rose up to face the darkness. In the forests, invoking the *Midwife*, smaller guilds were formed, known as dens, later named as the **Hecateion**: gatherings of pagans, religious practitioners, druids and witches, using both nature and land, rituals and curses, oracles and prophecies to protect their land from the Darkness.

Under oaths and secrecy, another guild emerged in this Century, called the **Charm**. Its followers, fascinated by the power of Trissevgené who changed the course of history, tried to communicate with otherworldly forces - demons and fairies, naiads and dryads, sylphs and fairies. Some

sought powers, others Truth. Many lost their minds, others, lost plenty more.

The Black Invasion

Finally, the Lands were conquered by the Black Empire of Tenebra just 2 years ago, and as suddenly as the conquerors took hold of it, they unexpectedly disappeared, leaving behind a bloody and corrupt world.

Nowadays

This is how the recorded history of these Lands ends - plunged into chaos, without protectors, its inhabitants desperately seeking safety from an inexplicable and unexpected horror lurking in the darkness.

Opposing forces fighting for dominion, lack of leadership, Superstitions and Heroes - tales of daring do and Living Nightmares.

Welcome to the South.