

Bronwyn's D&D Game
World Overview
(Humanocentric)

Land: The land is a peninsula with a few islands, and is bordered by a range of mountains to the north, beyond which exploration is limited. This is not so much because they are physically impassable, but because they are heavily infested with monsters of various kinds. The climate is mostly temperate, and there are some heavily forested areas, and some hilly regions. A major island ruled by elves lies off the east coast of the peninsula. The northern mountains stretch southwards through the centre of the peninsula, and are inhabited mainly by dwarves, gnomes, clusters of orcs, and the occasional monsters of various types. Except to the far north and in high mountainous regions, plant life is abundant and rich, and supports a variety of wildlife. Monsters of various types are present in moderate numbers in the south, but are rarely present in any great numbers of each type. Travel within a city or town, is almost always safe, though small villages and hamlets may be plagued by occasional monster attacks, which are usually taken care of by either the local resident monster hunter, or (in human lands) the reigning noble for that region, and his or her guards or militia. The human-ruled capital of Amara, Petathos, is a large city of around 20,000 permanent residents. Other human cities have a population of around 6,000 people.

The world is thought to be flat (by many people), or spherical (by those better educated, especially astronomers).

Racial & Prime Deity: Racial deities are popular among their people, and Pelor is the de facto human racial deity. Corellon Larethian is the god of elves, Carl Glittergold is the god of gnomes, Moradin is the god of dwarves, Gruumsh is the god of orcs, and Yondalla is the god of halflings.

Secondary Deity: Other deities are popular according to the profession of the worshipper, and the influence of evangelical activities of priests and clerics. Women often lean towards a preference for worshipping the goddesses.

Religion: No evil aligned deities are worshipped (at least openly) in any lands, apart from Orcish held areas, where Gruumsh is feared and honoured. Some gods, such as Pelor, have a highly organized hierarchial faith, consisting of priests who act as instructors, historians and celebrants, and clerics who are blessed with special powers and usually act as defenders of the faith and healers. Other gods, such as Fharlanghn, Olidammara and Ehlonna, do not have such structured and organized religious orders, but are popular, and have a significant number of worshippers. Note that many religious orders count both clerics and priests among their numbers; priests are devout servants of the gods who do not have any special divine abilities granted to them, but are respected for their piety and serve important ecclesiastic roles.

Clerics, priests, paladins, and the highly devout will pray for *at least* an hour every day. The devout will pray daily, often on rising or going to bed. The moderately devout will pray weekly, generally during attendance at a weekly religious service. Those who give their allegiance to a specific deity, but are not particularly devout, will respect the holy days of their deity, but pray only in times of trouble or in thanks for good fortune.

Literacy: Elves and half-elves are always literate, gnomes usually literate, halflings often literate, humans and dwarves quite often literate, and half-orcs rarely literate.

Government: The human kingdom of Amara is a monarchy, ruled by a king at present, and the nobility rule areas of the land under his authority. Elfland is ruled by a council of some kind, and a lot of officials. The halflings defer to the heads of their family or clan. Gnomes have some kind of clan council. The dwarves have lots of kings, or maybe one over-king and lots of nobles calling themselves kings. The half-orcs are no real nation, and have no leaders, neither do half-elves. Orcs are led by the strongest male in the tribe. Many weapons are restricted in human controlled lands, particularly in cities.

Economics: Standardized coinage is used throughout all the lands known, with silver the standard denomination. These coins are produced in Amara by the royal treasury, and bear the monarch's head. 1 silver is worth 10 copper pieces. 10 silver pieces are worth 1 gold piece. A common labourer will earn about 1 sp a day. In rural areas, there is a high level of self-sufficiency, and bartering is more common. In human controlled lands, a yearly tax is organized and collected by the lowest ranked noble in a region, from all residents, and amounts to around 5% of one's yearly income. Farming is the basis of the economy of Amara.

Races: Humans are the most populous race on the peninsula, and the dominant culture of the whole region, and know it (think Americans). Elves tend not to agree with the human perception of human dominance, and have warred with Amara in the past (most recently around 50 years ago). Dwarves, gnomes and halflings tend to concede the political and military might of the humans as being greater than their own, but do not regard humans as being intrinsically superior to them. Orcs are regarded as barely sentient, and tend to be treated as a marauding monster by most people. Half-orcs are tolerated more in human lands than elsewhere, and get a very poor reception in Elfland.

Racial Stereotypes: Elves are a complex and mysterious long-lived people, who can be very arrogant, and hold a grudge forever. They love music and dancing. They are vicious fighters in battle, and killed a lot of humans in their last battle 50 years ago. Dwarves are good solid folk who don't shirk at a hard day's work, and can be relied upon if they give their word to do something. They are very big on keeping up dwarven traditions. They don't make friends quickly; if your father or mother was a friend of a dwarf then they might consider you more highly. Halflings are a travelling race that never settles down, and are clannish folk who stick to their own. They don't seem to do much to earn a living, just scratching out an existence from town to town. They can be good merchants, and often have useful or rare trade goods for sale, but you can never entirely trust them. Some of them are light fingered, and many a chicken or newly dyed bolt of cloth seems to be missing after a particularly rag-tag bunch has passed through town. Orcs are murdering monsters, who kidnap and rape human women, who aren't as ugly as their own species. Half-orcs are the pitiable and ugly offspring of those poor women, and tend to have the violent tempers and poor intellect of their fathers. Half-elves are a very attractive people, and tend to like living with humans more than with elves. Everyone says they're sterile, and certainly they tend to be popular "companions" with the nobility particularly.

Magic: Elves are good at making magical items. Gnomes are good at illusions. Mages (wizards, sorcerers, etc.) are fairly common, but it is rare to see someone with a high level of skill. Such powerful individuals should be treated with respect, or reported to the local nobility if it looks like they are evil. One in 100 humans have some magical skill

(this includes divinely granted abilities). One in 1,000 humans have a moderate to high level of magical skill.

Trade: Amara produces for trade and export grain, spices, dried fruits, metals, and gems. The land imports and buys magical items and craft goods from the elves, metal from the dwarves, jewelry and carpets from the gnomes, and furs and animals from halflings. Halflings are common transporters and sellers of non-bulky trade goods.

Technology: The spyglass is the height of technological innovation. There are no windmills (handmills are common), and no guns of any kind (no cannons). Accurate timepieces are a novelty item for the nobility, and by no means portable. Most people keep time by the sun, moon, and stars, and the moderately well off might have a sundial in their courtyard or garden. Wizards and experimenters who like to measure small increments of time use marked candles of a uniform size, or sand hourglasses. Temples ring bells on holy days to call the faithful to worship. Larger amounts of time and calendar events (equinoxes, eclipses) are tracked typically by priests and other specialists. The following items from the "Special and superior items" list in the Player's Handbook are *not* available: Smokestick, sunrod, tanglefoot goo, thunderstone, tindertwig. Horses, ponies and donkeys are common pack animals. Smaller races use ponies and large dogs (think St. Bernard or labrador) for riding animals. The links between reproduction, conception, and inheritance of characteristics are understood even by commoners, and incest is a common taboo. Medicine is all herb-based, with some primitive surgery. Some herbs are seen as particularly efficacious because they are endowed by one of the gods with special healing properties. Sometimes the gods send disease as a punishment, and sometimes it is caused by evil mages or spirits, who do such nefarious deeds at the prompting of Nerull, god of death, darkness and disease, and sender of plagues. Holy clerics are good at casting out the evil spirits of disease. The principles of cleanliness as an aid to health, the importance of closed sewers and isolated toilets, and the elimination or reduction of vermin, and the importance of a varied diet as aids to good community health are vaguely understood by *some* of the population. Sailing ships are fairly primitive, and are (moderately) reliable as coastal vessels only. Oceanic vessels are only built on a noble's commission, when one wishes to fund an exploratory expedition. Few return.

Sayings: "When in Amara, do as the humans do".

Recreation: Humans are generally aware that an elf's idea of an amusement is a game or performance that lasts for a week. Halflings play games with slings. Gnomes and Dwarves presumably have some form of entertainment, maybe singing or musical instrument performances.