

A History of the Vastelands and its People

By

Jamian the Bard

With foreword by Arch-Scholar Decrivan

And additional addenda by Frannie van der Walt



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Foreword

To claim that the history of the Vätelands began at year one, by The Republic reckoning, would be short-sighted to say the least. Many Peoples and their extensive cultures have called the Vätelands home for millennia before Worrall the Explorer landed his 7,000 ships at Worrall Point, and will continue to do so long after we and our children have left this earth. This book, despite its title, makes no such claims. A more accurate title, therefore, would be 'A History of the Republic and its People.' But with the death of Jamian the Bard and the sacking of the citadel in 1092, its title has been left as is out of respect for the Order of Monks. Rather, my own foreword and addenda have been added, as well as notes on published works thanks to more recent discoveries by myself and my assistant, Frannie van der Walt.

Arch-Scholar Decrivan

Adventure Book Addendum

By

Frannie van der Walt



I. The Vitt People: A History

Little is known about the Vitt people. In fact, memory of their existence had disappeared into the realms of myth and legend until recently, when the ruins of their once thriving civilization was discovered by none other than Baela, the last known of her kin.

Since Scholars were led to these ruins, they were able to piece together the history of these fascinating people, although many pieces of the puzzle are likely to remain lost forever. How their civilization originated is one such piece that remains missing, but through extensive research we now have a clear idea of its tragic end.

The Vitt people made their home in the mountains of what is now the southern border of the Republic. The upper reaches of the Black Flow River brought nutrient rich water to their cities and villages, which they channeled to feed their extraordinarily advanced agricultural sector.

A secretive people, they were rarely seen outside the borders of their homeland, keeping interactions and trade with other races to a minimum. Their self-imposed seclusion likely played a large part in their ultimate downfall.

As mentioned in Jamian the Bard's chapter on the rise and fall of King Herron, men from the Coucal clan, under then Chief Herron, expanded their conquest southward towards the Vitt's mountain range. This region would later become the Southern Provinces of the Republic. Once an outpost was established, the men continued to dam up a vital branch of the

Black Flow which, we now know, led to widespread famine among the Vitt people.

In the year 302, the Vitt, under their last ruler, king Waine, made war on Herron's men. By then, though, their strength was so diminished that it soon turned into a slaughter. King Waine, of whom Baela is a direct descendent, was slain at the Battle of the Ford, essentially ending the history of the Vitt people. The few remaining Vitt fled into obscurity, while their cities fell into ruin over the next eight centuries.

With the succumbing of their civilization, the Vitt also took with them their vast knowledge of the solar system, superior advancements in technology as well as their lore and study of the magical arts. Recent findings suggest that the latter was intricately linked with their monotheistic religious beliefs.

As famine ravaged their population, many Vitt seemed to believe that it was a sign that their unnamed god had forsaken them. This led to a mass renouncing of their beliefs in favor of the gods of men, as can be seen in the burnt ruins of their temples. As a result, their abilities in the magical arts quickly diminished and was all but gone by the time of King Waine's war. The exact nature and limitations, if any, of their magical use remains unknown to all but Baela - more on this in a later chapter - but it appears to have been based on a system of the manipulation of earthly elements.

2. Baela the Undead Queen

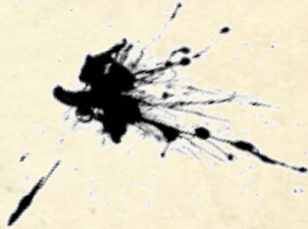
Shortly after her birth, Baela was given to the care of Ismarelda, a soothsayer, who traveled with a troupe of carnival performers. Her parentage was kept a secret from her. In fact, none but Ismarelda knew that Baela was Vitt, as their race had dwindled into tales of legend by then.

From a young age, Baela was forced to earn her keep as a sideshow attraction, often appearing naked for carnival patrons to gawk at her translucent skin and unnaturally white hair.

Natural disasters seemed to follow the troupe wherever they traveled, such as the 1102 flood of the Pitensie Valley and the devastating earthquake of 1113. But it was a fire that accounted for the troupe's demise. Scholars believe, whether intentionally or no, it was Baela's natural aptitude for magic that was the cause of these disasters. The entire troupe was later discovered to have perished in the fire. Ismarelda's body was found decapitated in her wagon. Baela has since been observed performing magic holding a flaming skull, though whether this is the skull of Ismarelda remains unconfirmed.

It is safe to say that none now remain in the Republic who has traveled as far and wide as Baela. Second and third hand accounts tell that Baela went on these adventures to learn the tales and secrets of her people. These are likely accurate retellings, as it was after a decade presumed dead that Baela re-emerged from the Vitt Mountains with the moniker The Undead Queen.

These travels have paved the way for scholars, who have since conducted extensive research into the fall of the Vitt civilization. Here we learned of Baela's rediscovery of their unnamed god, the controlled use of magic, and her claim to throw of the "dead people".



I. Rot Design

As far as guides go, there is no one better equipped in all of the Republic than the Undead Queen herself. Ironically, though, Baela can prove hard to track down. But if the adventurer's needs are great enough, there are always clues to her whereabouts. These are mostly in the form of natural disasters, which has become a calling card of Baela's.

Convincing Baela to join their company is another matter entirely. Since gaining the title of Undead Queen, Baela has made it her mission to educate others of her people's history. For some lucky travelers, particularly those who prove friendly to her cause, might even be taught in the magical arts. Although, much akin to her people's past, the most powerful secrets she keeps to herself.

Above all, Baela wants to teach the world about, as she calls it, the genocide of her people. Her teachings often lead to retribution, with a particular hatred of all things Coucal.

So, if adventure is to be had, and battle lies ahead, find Baela the Undead Queen, and mention the Coucal to her, and you might just be able to convince her that your quest is worth joining.

2. Function Packaging

All great heroes have their call to adventure. What makes a true hero is their answer to that call. The greatest adventures all have one thing in common: quests.

Like all great adventures, Quest Mode starts by assembling a team of heroes that is perfectly suited for a specific quest. Will swords be needed? Perhaps obstacles or enemies are expected that are more likely to be overcome with magic? Maybe even the unlikeliest of heroes are best suited for the task...

With only five spots available in your company, choose your heroes wisely. But remember, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. So, make sure your heroes are well suited for the task at hand.

Assemble your company and set out in Quest Mode, where heroes are made, and legends are born.

3. Event Design

In times past, Vitt royalty used to adorn their garb with the feathers of the legendary Great Ravens as a symbol of their station. These majestic birds roosted on the highest cliffs of the Vitt Mountains, but their population dwindled with the fall of the Vitt civilization.

For centuries they were thought to be extinct, but rumored sightings in recent times suggest that they may have returned to the Vastelands to roost.

Apart from their feathers that adorned royal regalia, it is said that their eggs hold mystical powers, which can be gained by whomever finds it.

However, their nesting sites remain a mystery and their eggs are more likely to be stumbled upon than being found if looked for, but that does not mean it is not worth trying.

Spread out across the Vastelands, for the hero who can achieve finding all the eggs, invincibility awaits.

Let the hunt begin.

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