

## Shared World 2010, The world of Bohumír

by

- Taylor Lewis • Jayde Barton • Zack Frey • Christopher Davis • Rae Berry •
- Carmen Laughlin • Harmony Riley • Crawford Muller • Jasper Ferehawk • Jackie Gitlin •
- Claire Pillsbury • Tyler Hayes • John Belmont •

The world, Bohumír, is composed of one large landmass and its outlying islands. This landmass is vast, encompassing more land than is easily conceivable. In modern times it is commonly divided into four regions: Kovina, The Wastes - once named Anéantir - Aysel, and Houlahai, a lesser island located to the north and east. The Westernmost realm, Kovina, is a godless land of technology and great cities where the individual is paramount. Kovina's eastern counterpart is Aysel, a more wild realm, where magic - called legacy - and religion bring the people into commune with nature and their goddess. Between these powerful giants lies The Wastes, a vast expanse of land reduced to arid near-lifelessness. It is only the strongest and most determined of nomads who can inhabit this barren and unforgiving place. The fourth and final realm is the island of Houlahai. This mountainous, sea-bitten land is inhabited only by a race of sentient bat-like creatures, and receives few travelers.

Circling these lands is a tumultuous and unpredictable ocean, whose tides are tormented by the ephemeral moon above it. To date there is no record of anyone crossing the horizon of this sea and returning. Nor is there any record of anyone coming from beyond the sea. The only thing that comes from this ocean are the violent storms that lash the coast.

### **Kovina**

Kovina is mostly populated by deliberately genetically modified people who are designing a utopia, though there are also normal humans present. These modified humans - derived from normal humans - have reached this state utilizing eugenic practices as well advanced genetics. This group also contains naturally-occurring mutants, but in general Kovinians are racist against animalistic people (or sentient animals). Kovinians have a several layered social system, similar to a caste system, which also operates using a type of social Darwinism. At the top of this structure are Angelics – beings who have achieved physical and intellectual perfection through eugenics. Despite the name, only some Angelics can fly. Furthermore, there are only thirty-four Angelics in modern times. Angelics have spliced genes from animals and human captives into their own genome to achieve certain characteristics – giving themselves dove wings for instance. Angelics are the highest authority in Kovina, with their slightest whim being obeyed by all lower classes. The next level of Kovinian society are Flawless. Less enhanced than the Angelics, they are still recognizably human, and their goal is to move up on the scale of perfection – to be better, stronger, faster, more durable. Flawless are perfect if body and mind. To achieve this goal they splice genes among themselves, always attempting to reach

perfection. The Perfects are similar to the Flawless, save that they are perfected in only body or mind, not both. Next are the non-genetically enhanced, or Faultless, who - lacking genetic perfection - strive toward behavioral perfection: being a good citizen, farmer, blacksmith, etc. Any person not fitting into the above castes is considered merely human.

In Kovina, if one is not striving towards and achieving perfection in one of the above ways, then one is exiled. The highest tier - the Angelics - control everything and everyone else.

There are several methods of achieving perfection, though obviously genetic manipulation is considered the most complete and desirable. Artists take the genes of an animal or person and give it to whomever hired them to obtain it. Sculptors perfect people through the grafting of mechanical limbs. These mechanical modifications are considered less than genetic enhancements, not only because they are removable but also because they only work within the bounds of Kovina. All Kovinian technology is rendered useless in the The Wastes and Aysel.

“Essence” is the Kovinian equivalent of DNA. Therefore all aspects of Kovinian society are designed to enhance one’s essence. It is also notable that within Kovina the drive to perfect one’s essence overcomes all other desires, leaving the Kovinian atheistic. Furthermore, this drive towards individualism also makes the average Kovinian very narcissistic.

## **Aysel**

Aysel is populated by a collection of races, boasting normal humans alongside genetic mutants, called the Touched, and sentient animals. Further, Aysel accepts any exiles from Kovina who choose to abide by Ayselvanian law. The people of Aysel are egalitarian and accepting.

Ayselvanians use legacy as opposed to Kovinian technology. However, legacy cannot violate the laws of nature, and should be used only when necessary. Therefore Ayselvanians do utilize some basic steam technology where legacy is not prudent. Though, this limited technology in no way makes them less than the Kovinians; the two societies have been well-matched since the end of the great war.

Religiously based in balance and non-interference, the spirituality of Aysel focuses on Aysella, Goddess of the Waxed Moon, and her Fractures. Moreover, this religion has engendered something of a matriarchal theocracy, both in the individual city-states and in the country as a whole. The twenty-one nearly-autonomous city-states each worship one of the Aysellian Fractures as their patron. Yet, the highest level of the centralized government is corrupt, and getting worse.

Legacy in the city-states is specifically trained in different places, and with different cities specializing in different skills relating to their patron.

The national character of Aysel is one shaped by religion in all aspects. All actions and motivations are measured by their impact upon nature, with the awareness that all things will eventually return to nature as this is the unavoidable fate of the legacy which sculpts them.

## **The Wastes (also called Anéantir)**

Between the lands of Kovina and Aysel exists The Wastes, a barren expanse of rock and sun. Once the fertile and peaceful land of Anéantir, the great war between the Kovinians and the Ayselvanians culminated in stripping the land of nearly all the necessities of life nearly two hundred years ago. What remains is a place fit only for the most hard-bitten survivalist, traveling from oasis to oasis. In The Wastes there is no goal but survival, and the nomadic bands who traverse this land accept anyone who can survive, even should they be an exile or refugee from the other lands. Only these small nomadic groups keep The Wastes from becoming completely anarchistic. The only surety here, is that when one weakens one dies.

Within The Wastes no Kovinian technology or Ayselvanians legacy functions properly, a lasting consequence of the cataclysm which ended the great war. Further, any sentient animal who crosses the border from Aysel soon becomes feral, losing what intelligence they might have had.

The only city within The Wastes is the small port of Ereshkai. It is here that the economy of The Wastes is centered, for from here is the rare plant braith exported. Prized by all people for its myriad of uses, braith is only found in the high reaches of the Gelgan Peak Mountains and jealously guarded by the inhabitants of The Wastes.

## **Houlahai**

Little is known about the island of Houlahai. It is a mountainous island, covered in forest. The only inhabitants of the island are a sentient race of seven-foot-tall bat people. Faster and stronger than humans, they are prized and hunted by the Kovinians. However, travel to the island is limited as the bat race will eat any intruders they catch.

## **The Moon**

The moon is the dominating feature of the heavens. A physical representation of the seminal gods of Bohumír, the umbra represents Kovin, once worshipped by the Kovinians, while his sister, Aysella is represented in all her forms by the effulgent moon.

Visible both night and day, most plants and animals have a connection to the moon, but none is quite so noticeable as that of the braith, which only flowers in its light.

Furthermore, it is because of this moon, its proximity and its size that the oceans are so hazardous. Tides remain unpredictable, and only the shortest of sea voyages is possible.

## **The Setting**

### **Aysel**

The ecosystem of Aysel is sylvan in nature, encompassing both deciduous and conifer forests. A land of great forests, high mountains and rushing rivers, perhaps the most apt description

of the land inhabited by the Ayselvanians is simply to call it verdant. The ambient legacy of the realm causes the flora to grow larger in scale as well as stronger.

## **The Wastes**

The ecosystem of The Wastes is harsh. The lack of water influences every aspect of life in The Wastes. The Wastes are filled with rolling hills, and vast unexpected crevasses. The nomads travel from oasis to oasis, subsisting on what the glaring sun allows to grow in the rocky waste. The oases are surrounded by pomegranate trees.

Some of the plants which grow in The Wastes:

Trip-Root is a man-eating tree, which has roots that spread around it and which grab anyone who steps upon them. Once grabbed, the roots carry the victim to the plant's mouth, where they are eaten. Trip-Root's look dead and smells of decaying.

Braith is a flowering plant which contains stored water, and only blooms at night. Only found in the Gelgan Peak Mountains, braith is used as a foodstuff and a water source by the nomads. The leaves are also able to be treated to resemble knives. However, as it is prized by all the peoples of Bohumír, braith is the export of The Wastes. Some of the reasons it is prized are:

In Aysel

- braith is sacred to the moon
- the water stored within the plant is considered holy.
- the seeds function as stimulants for legacy
- the leaves - which are slightly narcotic - are used for healing, tea, and religious ceremonies
- the water is used to treat leather

In Kovina

- the plant is valued for its beauty, because each flower is completely unique from all other flowers
- the higher levels of society use it as a houseplant despite its ephemeral nature
- the seeds can also be used to feed someone for a day due to their high caloric content

Some of the animals which inhabit The Wastes:

There are a variety of predators; most things are predatory towards man.

- There are prairie dogs which hunt in packs.
- There are spider-crabs with the head of kimodo dragon. They have a thick protective layer of crab-like exoskeleton, and the poisonous bite of a kimodo dragon.

## **Kovina**

Outside of the large cities, grasslands dominate the landscape. The countryside is also farmed, because the Kovinians are vegetarian. Other plants are grown within the cities for aesthetic purposes, for example: iris, jasmine, Japanese maple, cherry trees, pear trees, vines, and ivy. The cities are towering and clean, made of steel and glass.

Kovina is kept pristine through the use of cold fusion, making the use of pollution generating energy sources unnecessary.

### **Houlahai**

The island of Houlahai is composed of a range of mountain peaks which rise from the sea. Covered in coniferous forests, the island is lush and filled with fruit bearing trees to feed the bat inhabitants.

### **Religion**

#### **Aysel**

Ayselvanians worship Aysella and her Fractures. Among the Fractures, there are five greater and five lesser principle gods, reflecting the ten phases of the moon. Furthermore, each Fracture is dedicated to a month of the Ayselvanian year.

The Greater Fractures:

- Maa, goddess of earth
- Rozár, god of fire
- Voolu, god of water
- Levegó, god of air
- Vaim, goddess of spirit

The Lesser Fractures:

- Oreíou, goddess of chaos
- Strio, god of war
- Asta, goddess of love
- Nostera, goddess of the harvest
- Dragoste, god of order

#### **Kovina**

Kovinians are more spiritual than religious. Kovin, God of the Dark Moon, is a teacher, advocating the perfection of the individual. His symbol is the black owl. His followers are considered narcissistic.

#### **Wastes**

The nomads of The Wastes have no religion, survival being their only dogma.