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Description automatically generated

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* Pulse –

Welcome to Deges & Dragons today we are playing the grimdark game *Shattered* brought to you by It’s Never Dark Enough. This game has a rich history in its own world – Feneryss spanning three millennia before our present date. I definitely encourage you to look into it on your own, but for the sake of our session I will be giving a brief synopsis of the formation. Then we will explore but a fragment of the landscape available.

SO 600 Old World time, civilization reaches its peak. Humans populated an expansive planet on the precipice of advanced technology with abundant animal and plant life.

Year 0 Old World. Then came *The Reckoning.* Imagine if you will the cult the size of a country, named *The Alypse*, committing a horrific dark ritual. This was in an attempt to summon forth the alien deity called *Ragnarok* to begin his reign over the world. Fortunately, they failed, however, the magical energies were still released ending life across the planet and horribly maiming it. The Alypse who survived were disfigured and branded as those who destroyed Feneryss. A massive fissure in the earth, *The Maw,* allowed the flow of arkana with a K and umlaut over the second A to permeate the land and unimaginable creatures crossed over to now roam.

Year 0 Post Reckoning, also known as Diaspora, humanity gathers in various places attempting to survive while they progressively change over the years along with their once great planet. Violent storms, blizzards, earthquakes, fire, etc. rock the land, but gradually humanity morphs and mutates, builds and plans while eventually this weather stabilizes somewhat. Humanity gets to start anew.

484 P.R. The City of Pulse, where our characters will be in the distant future, is first established. Known for its immense walls, inclusive culture, and recruitment attempts, people gather and build.

Skip ahead past all sorts of tribulations, wars, developing cities, and so forth to 2746 P.R. the *Arkanik Drive* or Ark-Drive was developed. What this machine does is support its own gravitational field while countering that of the planet’s. This creates the illusion of flight which interconnects all the cities around the world. Nobody actually knows who invented it. Many have claimed, but have been caught in the lie, so the legend of the Mad Mechanik was born.

2762 P.R./1 A.E. (Archanik Era) the War of Fool’s ends, a struggle over access to clean flowing water in the city of Lokoran, after Lokoran threatens to blow up the source. The Cistern Accords are signed, Lokoran becomes a sovereign state, a universal calendar consisting of 3 seasons is established, and a common currency called notes are recognized.

100 A.E. our present day. The season is Fren’Tella, that of cold and calm in the month of Brespeak. This is of course when the Undead Tide has traveled past Pulse to the West toward Sylvan Hollow, a neighboring city underground full of Old World technology. Anyway, that’s for another tale for we are all in The Great Forge.

Now, what’s the deal with Pulse?

It’s one of the oldest places in all of Feneryss after the Reckoning. When humanity barely survived in bivouacs, they’d talk of the legendary spire that stretched toward the sky. Tired of meager survival, eventually people traveled in droves in search of this fable, which turns out exists. A group known as *The Iron Ring* was charged with defending the city and named it Pulse believing it would be the heart of the land. With a bright future in mind, they mapped out their plan with a set of rules called the *Mandate*. Essentially all residents were required to maintain a useful trade that could benefit the city. Many people rediscovered meaning for their lives. All across Fenyress people flocked to Pulse, eager to work within the safety of the walls. The fire of industry roared and giant war machines as well as an army were built unlike anything since pre-reckoning.

Skip ahead 1400 years or so. A fishing vessel belonging to Pulse was attacked by a ship in the sky. The Iron Ring believed they were insane and discharged them. The citizens, however, grew restless that nobody was at least checking out their story. Eventually another vessel was attacked once more from a ship in the sky. Citizens began rioting, no longer confident with the Iron Ring’s rule. A young charismatic officer named Brecht led the coup d’état successfully.

Brecht loved the past traditions though. He divided Pulse into the city districts and military branches that exist today and placed an *Iron Lord* in charge of each. Once all of that was settled, he turned his gaze to the water, which precedes the *War of Duel Lake.*

Ok, so today what are the basics, how do we eat? Pulse allots daily rations based on one’s job requirements and rank. Clean water is attained by using local crustaceans that feed on toxins to filter water. Food primarily comes from tenderoot, which its roots, leaves, and fruit are all edible.

The city itself is broken up into the Axis, which is where all the huge spires are that house militaries and the administration in charge which includes all the Iron Lords. The Flora Labs, which are in the connecting walls between the spires. There botanists, engineers, and arkanists work together to improve ways to feed the people with hydroponics. These labs and the food storage have the tightest security of anywhere in Pulse. The Great Forge is essentially an underground reflection of the surface with factories everywhere building all the warships and military weaponry. Crime is rampant below though and are home to the Death Pits – let me add the words gladiator and gambling, you know what goes on there. Though unlike the surface, which is meticulously planned, beneath is chaos. Downtrod is actually a small town just outside the walls. After the population became so dense, the City Guard became allowed to remove deviants and criminals from the city and so they settled just beyond. Finally there is Quarterlock, where our adventure will begin!

Here the remainder of the citizens live from wealthy to destitute. It is split into five sections in accordance with the five towers of Axis. One would be crazy to navigate these winding alleys without a guide or intimate knowledge of the area. It is governed by microgovernment, powerful individuals, the Pathfinders, and the Vortem. The Pathfinders are the police division responsible for Quarterlock and their commanding officer is Pes Grimtrod. The Vortem are a crime conglomerate of thieves, assassins, and smugglers whose services are bought for secrets and wealth.

As I said earlier we’re in the season of Fren’Tella and individuals of all kinds rest easy. Let me give you a snapshot of the playable races and we’ll get to our characters.

The Alypse are those descended form the original cultists. They have odd triangular heads with a single gem like eye in the center and are often seen with disdain still for ruining the world. They have the ability, however, to appear as humans and can retain this shapeshift ability even while sleeping.

The Wretched are those who survived out as nomads in the wastes and underground. They have mutated more than anyone else leading them to be strong and have warped aspects that make them valuable such as being a walking power source.

Vampires are those who lived in caves and require blood to survive. They have formed covens around Fenryss where they have become civilized…mostly.

Drones are those people who became obsessed with achieving perfection through modifying themselves. The result now is mostly machine-like people that are rumored to kidnap people for experiments.

The other four are our players – tell us all about yourselves

We begin today at about 5pm outside the usual bar with the group heading in for their usual drinks.

*Story Point A - Alchemy*

*Through a dank brightly lit alleyway foot traffic is particularly dense at the end of a shift from work. J2 Avenue has developed a reputation of late for being safe to traverse. The most notable businesses amongst the apartment buildings are Alchemy, a bar with beaker shaped chimney stacks illuminated by various colored lights and House, a shop that sells small trinkets and favors. Both have carved out sterling reputations thanks in part to the diverse crew overseeing them.*

Inside we see a new bartender named Joey Z, a clean shaven middle aged man with spikey hair. A single figure looms in the back corner booth who has been drinking the day’s special – grain alcohol & rat feet with a wooden straw called Splinter. (This is in fact Ghengis Gramps). Incogskeeto never show up for work, which is very unlike him.

*Story Point B - House*

*You arrive outside House to an eerie stillness surrounded the building. The stereotypical, “It’s too quiet” is rather prevalent given the overpopulation. You look in either direction and suddenly there is nobody outside. A 2 foot cylindrical package sits in the threshold with a note attached ~ “Please hold on to this for safe keeping. I know I can trust you.” There is no signature and the package appears locked.*

**\*SECRET\*** The package is in fact a one of a kind missile that violently forces the land to grow abundantly like in the Old World. It is an amalgamation of engineering and magik. The major side effect is it warps all magik within its blast radius and both frenzies and attracts the Undead Tide.

House has been boobytrapped with basic explosives at the back door. (Pg 199) It is an earthshaker intended to imprison the players in the backroom for Ghengis Gramps to capture them and the package. There is a secret passage to Pulse underground. Players will have to fight off gang of thugs.

***Story Point C*** *– Mosaiq’s Center*

*Beneath Pulse’s massive city is a reflection of the bustling giant. This mirror image is not an exact match, but rather the opposite. While the categories are relatively the same with warships constructed where the armies reside, where there is order above maintained by Pathfinders, beneath is a land of chaos. In the distance there is radical music blaring toward the city center.*

The players here should be a bit out of their element. Peace isn’t enforced by police, but by mercenaries for the companies. Gambling is rampant to the point of Death Pits raking in Notes. At the center of the city is none other than Mosaiq, a drone dressed in expensive red and gold garments with a unique symbol on his face plate. He has a variety of sonic attachments making him a walking concert. His parts can be adjusted and honed into stunning or lethal effects. He too wants the package.

***Story Point D – Death Pits***

*Shrouded in the midst of massive conglomerates, the mad cheers of bloodthirsty souls reach your ears. At their center is a pit aptly named for its horrid stench* ***Death****. While plenty of citizens make up the mob of gamblers, a particular vampire stands out – the information broken Vsevolod.*

Players will likely want to gather info here. To even gain access to the suite they’ll have to participate in the pits or show off plenty of money. The reigning champion here is a wretched known as Khronan. He has augmented himself continuously investing his winnings into horns, a massive arm, and radioactive breath. He is terror to observe.

Vsevolod will sell information that a rumored weapon was developed, and everyone wants it. The Savinic Lord Garrulous-in-Solitude has his agents seeking it, but spymasters from every city have come to find it. Whoever holds it will either be very rich or very dead.

***Story Point E - Downtrod***

*Outside the massive walls a shanty town has sprung up from the exiles or fresh travelers of Pulse. The coven Stillyr roam every corner, steadfastly defending it. Strangely enough the Undead Tide persists despite the seasonal change.*

Players will find temporary safety amongst the coven. Abraham or Vsevolod will have guided them here, but they too want the weapon in order to pay off their debts to the Skryst. Here players will encounter a few undead that they should easily be able to overcome. Eventually the vampires will try to steal the weapon without violence first. If players need to be bailed out, Zoom, the Shade spy will shoot a rocket into the battle.

***Story Point F – 1-0-1-1 (Drones)***

*The small section of Quarterlock is decorated with nothing but plain grey. Everything is in place and clean with a small robot constantly moving around collecting filth. Even in a massive city and accepting human culture, the Drones have managed to find each other and stick together.*

The Minute Clinic & Curio shop where Tissue and L.I.C.A. reside also is home to several other Drones who are not quite as open to wearing clothing. A repair shop simply called 3 is run by Triple, a being of 12 metallic tentacles with six eyes, tells everyone he can communicate with any machine. Patch is the other Drone here claiming to be the leading psychiatrist in all of Fenyress. She simply operates out of her home with a sign out front.

***Story Point G – Security Check***

*At the security check to enter the inner workings of Pulse, military personnel watching and check each individual with metal detectors. It’s apparent they’re on the look out for something and not simply observing for safe passage.*

The only person who could realistically pass through the check is Dirk. It’s obvious non-humans are being held aside. One other survivor of the crash is Pickleous, the most radical Florvana for nature dominating humanity. He will notice Trumpet or be noticed one way or the other he’ll play a role here.

***Story Point H – Flora Labs***

*After somehow finding your way into the most secure place in all of Pulse you see a well-lit work of beauty. Plants grow abundantly under the careful guidance of a few people in lab coats. Cameras rotate at each end leading one massive laboratory/greenhouse to another.*

This is the most secure place in the entire city. If players manage to enter here, there will be security guards coming for them quickly.

***Story Point I – The Great Forge***

*Before you is the source of the city’s moniker. Massive mechanical forges, people covered in fire retardant outfits, and massive weaponized vehicles move about. While the various military units themselves roam above, those with engineering prowess or simply want to test out the latest toys find this to be home.*

Players will be able to blend in or hide here fairly easily provided they can remotely fit in. Acquiring any gear would be another story. Clearance is needed to walk away with anything dangerous. Several of the Lords move about in secure ways here overseeing the work.

***Story Point J – Professor Caviar’s School For the Nifty***

*Almost randomly, a white picket fence stretches across the front of several houses tied together. You stand before a school that teaches anything but trades. The dashing Professor Caviar rolls out to you in a hovering chair with a welcoming smile upon his face. As if going out of his way to dress opposed to Pulse’s modern fashions, he dresses like the fabulous of yesterday…or maybe hoity toity Lanisian clothes.*

Players can learn some old information here, buy expensive weird clothes, or simply relax. Nobody bothers him probably because he’s a bit off-putting and doesn’t own anything people want.

***Story Point K – The Pound***

*The shameless pleasure palace before you sports a number of private rooms. Use your imagination.*

**Appendix A – Notable Characters**

**Aafia Um-khal –** Lordess of Armies, a short blonde proper woman, she dresses very conservatively and never reacts strongly always keeping her steely cold composure.

**Abraham –** a well-spoken vampire of the Stillyr coven, he has black curly hair and intense azure eyes. He is tall and skinny coming off as unimposing, but it’s part of his charm when dealing with non vampires. *\*Secret He is a spy for the coven and is tasked with recovering the box.*

**Ace Ibhari –** One of the few national celebrities in Pulse, she is a pilot known for taking down pirates in the sky. Her public persona is brash, but she’s actually quiet. *\*Secret She received the order to shoot down the protest ship with promise of return to her old strike team.*

**Alyse Tolsen –** one of the personal guards of Ghyst and older sister of Marie-Kate. She is an explosives expert.

**Anatoly –** Leader of the Stillyr vampire coven, he is wizened and cares about nothing above the wellbeing of his coven. *\*Secret They unfortunately are in debt to the* *Skryst coven. He has set loose one of his spies Abraham to recover the box in order to pay off their debt.*

**Bill Petros – *\*****Secret* *Former Captain of The Phage elite military group, he suspects something sinister at work within the collective Iron Lords of Pulse. He has returned to his home after having reconstructive surgery to completely alter his appearance but carries one of his old scimitars. He is now part of Ghyst’s personal guard.*

**Bogdan –** Brother of the Stillyr coven leader Anatoly. Believed to be nothing more than a Boogieman by most citizens including coven members. He is a silent enforcer form the shadows.

**Denna Lohrne –** Lady of the Forge, she wears an eye patch and is laden with scars. She personally went into the Death Pits beneath Pulse and violently murder several people with just her bare hands. Anything she personally has a hand in is brought to order under her iron fist.

**Garrulous-in-Solitude –** Savinic Lord, the special ops full of Psykicks and stealth members. Of those recruited for his branch only about a third survive the training.

**Ghengis Gramps –** A wretched who has mutated to look very old despite having his youth and strength. He is a spy trained by a pack of warlord wretched in the middle of the expanse named Ever Scerate. He’s seeking a weapon to take back to them.

**Greggs Holland –** a rather homely human who never lets Ghyst out of his sight. He is a master marksman bragging he never misses whether it be a rifle or a throwing knife.

**Ghyst –** Iron Warden who is essentially spymaster for the city. He actually goes out into the other parts of the city accompanied by his personal guard consisting of 4 soldiers – Marie-Kate & Alyse Tolsen, Greggs Holland, and newest member Bill Petros. *\*Secret\* He is a disguised Alypse*

**Hearst Rocshtaal –** The Iron Lord, extremely popular leader who often gives grand speeches to the masses though rarely walks among them. He was born of the Death Pits and took his first kill at the age of 6. His loyalty to Pulse is matched only by his brutality. *\*Secret\* A disguised Alypse who stole the identity of one of the children he killed in the Death Pits at the same age.*

**“High” Dee -** 28-year-old female military scientist. She has straight crimson dyed red hair, though she is a natural crimson red head. She has various animal tattoos, wears a lab coat with zebra stripes, and jeans with tears in them. She is constantly smoking mushrooms from an elongated wooden pipe she made. She adopted 2 guinea pigs that were experimented on, which are now 3ft. and 40 lbs. She calls them “The Bobs” and they’re constantly chittering around her protectively. She has “trust” issues where she doesn’t think she knows who to trust, but haphazardly trusts Mors for no real reason. She has been known to laugh at her own jokes – it’s best to chuckle along. While she is quirky and volunteers to change random babies’ diapers, she is quite skilled at her job. For several years now she has been the first scientist in the field whenever something of note pops up. This is a mix between no other scientists being brave enough and because she has succeeded following through on these suicide missions.

**Incogskeeto –** a stout and strong bartender who works at Alchemy. He speaks little and lets his expressions speak for him. He unfortunately dies at the beginning of the session, murdered mysteriously.

**Jordan Flunn –** a four-armed human who owns the Grey Shade Tavern. This is the eminent bar in Quarterlock known for the flashy way Jordan serves multiple drinks at once with flair. He is legendary and he keeps an open ear to any who’d listen.

**Jun Pak –** A genius smith who was born of a high house in Lanis, but has settled in Quarterlock to offer durable and affordable weapons to average people. He cares little about who obtains his weapons, only that they’re used correctly. He’s an odd man, but is quite capable of using his weapons to maim and kill.

**Khronan –** The current champion of the Death Pits. He has horrifically augmented himself with every paycheck seeking to become the greatest ever.

**L.I.C.A. –** An odd Drone who owns a small humble curio shop in Southern Quarterlock. She has accepted human culture and dresses in a blue dress with a golden wig with pigtails. While the shop is full of random items, nothing is actually for sale. She instead finds objects and holds on to them for their owners. She steadfastly defends these items even if they’re only old shoes. If asked where she’s from she’ll always ask instead, “What have you lost?” She currently holds one of Peterson’s scimitars.

**Ludis –** Governor in charge of maintaining the Axis itself. He is a rotund man who is constantly flustered with all the paperwork around his desk. He stress eats all day to make sure nothing is out of place considering the might of the Iron Lords.

**Lysanius –** One of the most powerful people in all of Feneryss, he is the prolific information broker of Pulse. He knows secrets of anyone and for all the illegal activity he has a hand in could never realistically be arrested for the dirt he has on anyone with even slight amounts of power. On top of this, nobody knows how to actually get to him.

**Marie-Kate Tolsen –** One of the personal guards to Iron Warden Ghyst, she is a poison expert

**Mosaiq (1) –** Popular literal underground music maestro. He is far from the typical drone dressed in red and gold silk where the average one won’t bother wearing clothing at all. He has attachments to project actual sound from his person. *\*Secret\* He is actually a powerful spy from Dronus. His sonic attachments can be used as weapons to do serious damage or simply disable things. He resides in Pulse to experiment on all the other races like Diane Fossey among gorillas. He is asked to obtain the missile.*

**Neebus –** A nerdy rekindled who was human and recalls his past life, dying while researching a new type of energy from dragons. He has made his way to Pulse to research more safely.

**Patch –** A drone who wears and a tweed jacket and bowtie as well as a tutu has modded herself to have her eyes appear to be wearing bifocals which actually can zoom in and out. She has cosmetic metal pulled back into an extremely thick ponytail. She has a bit of cobalt paint sprayed on her cheeks to appear as blush. She claims to be a master psychiatrist and has managed to install all psychology directly into her memory.

**Pes Grimtrod –** Police commander of Quarterlock

**Pickleous –** A Florvana who was on the same ship as Trumpet Royale that crashed. He actually sabotaged the ship from the inside to explode and jumped off safely. He wants the missile and is forming an eco-terrorist group planning to use the technology all over the world and force nature to take its place atop Feneryss.

**Professor Caviar –** An old school human of yesteryears fashions. Though he looks like he’s in his early thirties, his mannerisms would suggest he’s far older. Rumor has it he’s had a number of surgeries to look at least half his age. He teaches history like he’s been there (which he has) and holds adult classes for socializing. He’s from a Lanis though he doesn’t share anything beyond that. *\*Secret\* He grew up as a butler to a wealthy family the Lanisters, but they were odd and violent people. He is also part of the Vortem and his home is free from crime without any other criminals truly being aware of it.*

**Symphony –** Gilt-Edge’s best friend and love interest back home. She is a great fighter and will make

**Tissue (8, 12) –** A drone operating a small minute clinic for those who need quick patch ups and can’t afford for more advanced medical care. While Tissue saves people on a daily basis, it cares little for them and only heals them in exchange for genetic samples for its own experiments.

**Triple –** A drone with three times the limbs and eyes operates a repair shop called 3. He claims to be able to communicate with any machine, but looks quite crazy.

**Ulder Ving –** The Lord of Navy

**Vsevolod –** She is part of the Vampire Coven Stillyr who operates out of Downtrod in Pulse. She has largely made a living stealing secrets from the infamous Information Broker Lysanius. She manages to do so successfully with the protection of her entire coven and perhaps he does not see her as a true threat.

**Zoom –** a Shade spy from the Glass Forest. Has long black hair kept in a smooth ponytail. He has been sent to collect the weapon. Symphony’s mother is arranging the marriage between them.

**Appendix B – Notable Places**

**3 –** A mechanic/repair shop run by Triple

**Alchemy –** A small bar with a few regulars, it’s known for serving anybody and creating strange mixes to get anybody drunk out of their mind. The owner, Incogskeeto, is a stout hardy man with a creative mind. It’s rumored that Vortem agents work out of the back.

**Axis –** The center of Pulse where ever-growing towers pierce the sky. Here is the housing for all the rulers of the city as well as each branch of the military. There are five towers, each one home to administration for important cogs – navy, martial forces, special forces, the Great Forge, and Quarterlock. Governor Ludis

**Death Pits –** The champion is Khronan, a heavily modified wretched. Vsevolod will be here in a special box that’s guarded.

**Downtrod –** A town itself outside the walls of Pulse. The vampire coven Stillyr operates here and defends it with all its might. Otherwise those deemed criminals or deviant have been exiled from Pulse here.

**House –** The pawn/favor shop belonging to Mors. It isn’t particularly large or contains much of anything. He’ll sell the random trinket here or there. The shop itself can be seen front to back with a semi-circular counter at the back. There is a single door to the back room that locks.

**The Minute Clink** – A drone by the name of Tissue operates here saving all sorts of people who can’t afford better care in exchange for genetic samples. While boasting a high recovery rate, Tissue cares very little for the people it saves.

**Mosaiq Center –** A constant concert is being performed here through the day stemming from the Drone Mosaiq. Businesses battle to get close to him.

**Quarterlock –** A massive part of Pulse where the wealthy to destitute live. It is densely populated and separated into 5 subsections

**Security Check –** A large gate separates Quarterlock from the inner working of Pulse.