Anti-Magic Faction

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General Information

Who are they?

- Called the **Republic of the Undergrowth**, is a very limited democracy led by a council of eleven people (+ one open seat)
- Formerly called the **Kingdom of the Undergrowth**, a monarchy under the Valanidiá royal family
- very prejudiced against all “new” forms of magic
- Exception is healing magic, which has been a part of the forests culture for longer than their kingdom existed

What is their goal?

- To drive out all “new” forms of magic, at least from their country if not the whole forest
- To discover the truth about the night the queen was murdered, and bring the people responsible to justice
- To find the Queen's brother and have him join the Council to give the new Government legitimacy

Why do they have that goal?

- Their country was ravaged by Bandits wielding Mages
- A group of mages killed their queen
- Parts of their territory was devastated by bandits wielding magic almost immediately afterwards, they do not know if it was a coincidence or planned

What kind of animals are part of the Faction?

- Eastern red-backed salamander [Common]
- Eastern cotton tail (Rabbit) [Common]
- Northern cardinal (Bird) [Uncommon]
- White tailed deer [Rare]
- Eastern fence lizards [Very rare, almost only the royal family]

What kind of culture do they have?

- Has developed a tendency towards Collectivism
- Prejudice against mages and people from the Magic Faction
- They usually live in bigger buildings with multiple families
- They prefer to build in the shade of trees or cliffs, and rarely build in the trees
- Prefer light and simple clothing with more exposed skin rather than less
- Popular colors for clothing and decoration are dark green and brownish-red (color of fertile soil common in their land)

What kind of classes do they prefer?

- No magic classes, only support healer classes and potential variants
- Classes focused on anti-magic combat, less prepared to deal with non-magical threats like heavily armored units
- Majority of classes are agile units that can kill mages as fast as possible before they can cast their magic
- Class Archetypes by rarity:
  - Rangers [Common]
  - Healers [Slightly uncommon]
  - Fighters [Uncommon]
  - Mages [None]

What kind of Quests/Events do they have?

- Encounter the former Court Mage that disappeared the night the queen died and discovering the truth
- **Finding the lost brother of the queen to bring him back and let him claim the open seat on the council**

- Working with the only survivor from the time the Artifact first activated to uncover clues about the original purpose of the Artifact(s)
- (Minor Quest) Driving Mages out of their territory

Artist Guidelines

Animals by rarity:

- Eastern red-backed salamander [Common]
- Eastern cotton tail (Rabbit) [Common]
- Northern cardinal (Bird) [Uncommon]
- White tailed deer [Rare]
- Eastern fence lizards [Very rare, almost only the royal family]

Is the culture based on or inspired by existing cultures or concepts?

- No.

General Style of Clothing:

- Short, light clothing
- often expose their stomachs or arms, but prefer to keep their entire legs covered
- same colors as decorations usually, dark green and brownish-red

Coloring Scheme

- prefer darker shades of green or browns
- use (brownish-)red for contrast, used less than green

General Design of Classes:

- Fighters and Healers prefer the lighter clothing common to their people
- But healers usually wear lighter green colors, and prefer to have their faces covered
- Rangers cover their entire bodies to blend in with the environment

Preferred classes (sorted by rarity):

- Rangers [Common]
- Healers [Slightly uncommon]
- Fighters [Uncommon]
- Mages [None]

Style of Architecture:

- Prefer to build wide, not tall
- Their older buildings used to be very stylistic, but they started to build with a more utilitarian style

- Prefer to incorporate the surroundings instead of changing it to suit the buildings
- Usually build in the shadows of large objects like big trees or cliffs
- Building hidden from sight because of smaller bushes and similar flora
- Buildings use dark wood preferably, and sometimes stone if its available
- Decoration use dark green and brownish-red

Main Biome (Biome that makes up the majority of their territory):

- Enormous trees
- thick bushes, often thorned
- predominantly larger flora, and often vines ranking around buildings, trees or cliffs
- often foggy, lots of moss

Naming Conventions:

- The name of their faction is "Republic of the Undergrowth"
- They call themselves the "Shaded People"
- Names of places usually either reference Shadows or the Undergrowth

Background

History and Culture of the Faction

History

The Republic of the Undergrowth (Anti-Magic Faction)

Discovery of "new" Magic

The Shaded People, they called themselves. Under the protective shadow and aegis of their royal family, the lineage of Valanidiá Royal Family. Their’s was a humble Kingdom, small but wealthy and peaceful.

When what they knew of Magic expanded beyond just healing, the people were elated. A tool for those weak of body, a shield to protect the young and a weapon to vanquish any that would dare disturb their peace.

Reluctant Acceptance of Magic

What many saw as boon for their people, for their neighbors and kin, some saw it as a path to power. Encouraged by **INSERT MAGIC FACTION HERE**, they amassed power and knowledge, admired by their peers. Many people were mistrusting of these new and potentially dangerous eccentrics, and met them with scorn.

But Melia Valanidiá (Lizard), Queen of the Undergrowth, bid them to meet these new developments with an open heart and mind. As an example to her people, she created the title of Court Magician, and welcomed a young and talented mage into her court. To reflect this, some cities and towns gave mages various occupations, coming with both duties and privileges. And so, mages started to find their place among the ruling class and the common people, slowly integrating with the Kingdom.

Devastation caused by Magic

It seemed that magic would become a fact of life in the Kingdom, a path to plenty and growth, but life was not so kind. One day suddenly, pillagers wielding magic started attacking villages and towns across the country, quickly overwhelming the guards who were unused to combat with magic.

And the few towns that possessed a local mage barely fared any better, with most of their own mages being researcher woefully unprepared for combat. Seeing the devastation caused by magic, and the ineffectiveness of their own mages, the people that were mistrusting of mages felt vindicated. The voices of discontent grew, but it did not yet escalate into violence.

Training to combat Mages

The queen cautioned her people not to be rash, but did not remain idle. Under the guidance of the Court Mage and the High Strategist of the Kingdom, she developed strategies to counter mages and started training her soldiers in anti-magic combat. Some mages left, angered that the crown would rather prepare to fight against them, instead of attempting to strengthen their own ranks.

The Queen's Murder

But before the training could really take off, a group of mages attacked the Palace in the night. With their training barely begun, the guards crumbled beneath the might of the first expert combat mages they encountered. The queen was slain, and the Court Magician was nowhere to be found.

The following Chaos

With their queen slain, their palace plundered, their armies shattered, and their people broken by grief, a period of unrest and lawlessness started. The remaining mages quickly found themselves exiled, if they were lucky.

The Queen was young, and as such had no direct heir. The royal family has always been small, and as misfortune would have it, the only viable candidate for Kingship, her brother, had gone on a journey (to discover something? WIP). Mired by grief and guilt, few dared to try and claim the throne. The ones that did try found themselves unable to obtain proper support from the remaining court, let alone the citizens.

Return to Order

Once some semblance of peace was restored to the Kingdom, two things had become clear: Firstly, that mages, once they delved deeply into the secrets of magic, attained powers no mere mortals should possess. It put them above their fellow people, and gave them leave to oppress them or even kill them at their leisure. Magic had to be forbidden. (This did not include healing magic, which existed long before the current known magic. To avoid any issues with their new laws, healing magic was considered a separate category from magic altogether.)

And secondly, they realized that having a sole ruler will leave uncertainty and chaos in the event of their untimely death, and so decided to create a ruling council instead. The council consisted of the highest members of the court, and the three citizens that were critical in restoring peace and order to the kingdom. Additionally, in honor of their history, they reserved a spot on the council for the queen’s brother should he ever return.

As long as all members of the council stay loyal to the newly christened Republic, a brighter future surely lays ahead of them…

Culture

Architecture & Community

Even before it became a republic, the people of the undergrowth preferred to live in close-knit communities, both socially and politically.

Preferred Architecture

With their stretch of the forest being populated by enormous trees and many cliffs, their buildings had been almost exclusively built in their shade, close to the ground. They preferred to build wide instead of tall, but would not shy away from taller buildings if the area they could use for building was too small.

Close-knit Communities

Multiple families lived in large buildings, often even building complexes, with villages with smaller populations sometimes even sharing only a single building complex. That meant that you could always run errands quickly and visit whoever you liked without problem, and that also meant that children could roam around the village without fear or direct supervision by their parents. After all, there was always someone there to watch over them.

Escape from Civilization for Privacy

That safety and security unfortunately had a drawback, as privacy was often lacking. With so many people living in a single area, you were never truly far from someone else. This led to the occasional person deciding to move away and live completely on their own, but few succeeded. Most returned after a while, unprepared to brave the dangers of the forest alone, and those even less prepared died. But every so often, people managed to not just survive alone, but also thrive.

Politics

And politically, despite being a monarchy, many of the royal court’s decisions were made by popular vote, or at least with the agreement of a few chosen representatives from amongst the populace. The final decision lay with the current monarch of course, but no monarchs in recent history had overturned decision made by the populace (largely because they were clever enough to led them decide on things they knew would lead to a result in the monarch’s favor).

Now with the last queen dead, and the monarchy abolished, the council ruled largely the same, but with far less decisiveness. Too many conflicting opinions often led to a decrease in efficiency.

Artifact

Backstory

First Discovery

Three generations ago, when the last queen’s great-grandfather still ruled, a powerful earthquake unveiled a magnificent man-made cave, carved into the heart of a cliff, and within its center sat a peculiar object that would later be recognized as an artifact.
The artifact seemed unassuming at first glance, just a particularly smooth metallic stone. The surrounding it was found in were rather conspicuous, so everyone suspected it to be an object of great importance.

Development of a Settlement

But much like the stone structure surrounding it, it proved resistant to any attempts to move or damage it. In the attempt to figure out its secrets, many interested parties, and their families moved to the surrounding area. It was supposed to be a short project of a few weeks, but in time, weeks turned to months and months to years. The people had begun to settle down, and a small town was born.

While the artifact remained a mystery, the quest for more durable tools strong enough to affect it led to a rapid growth in smithing techniques and discovery of more powerful alloys. With their unbelievable advancement in the forging industry, the town experienced a rapid increase in immigration, and grew to become a bustling city.

Activation of the Artifact

Many years passed, with any attempts to discover the secrets of the artifact having long since ceased. From time to time, a few curious people brave the maze to lay their eyes upon it, hoping against all reason that it would reveal its truth to them. Some other less curious people braved the maze out of boredom, and it was one of these people that first noticed the change in the artifact. One day, a group of kids returned from the cave in excitement, eager to report that the artifact had started glowing! Skeptical, but nonetheless curious, two guards followed them back to the artifact.

Tragedy inside the Artifacts Cave

After multiple hours, when people began noticing their absence and growing restless, a single figure emerged from the depths. It was one of the children, covered in blood and littered with

numerous cuts, limping towards the people of the city. Upon reaching the exit they collapsed without a word, their face streaked with tears.

According to them, lifeless imitations of people crafted from solid light started appearing en masse once they neared the artifact, and the soldiers quickly found themselves outmatched. They stood their ground, ready to sacrifice their lives for the children. But the real horror had only begun. Upon their attempt to return, they found the way back was already filled with even more constructs, dashing any hopes of a save getaway. One of them managed to brave the way back, but few would dare say that the survivor was fortunate.

Aftereffects of the Tragedy lasting until Today

And so, the entrance was declared of limits for civilians, henceforth watched over by a team of elite guards. Thankfully, none of the constructs ventured outside of the cave, with as good as none showing their faces anywhere close to the entrance.

The entrance remained under watch, but sometimes soldiers or adventurers enter the cave and brave the outer areas for training. The true danger began deep within its halls, and few where foolish enough to brave its depths again. To this day, the child from that one faithful day was the last person to lay their eyes on the artifact.

What kind of artifact does the faction possess?

- The actual artifact is found within a cave, but anything inside of its territory (the cave) is considered part of the artifact
- Produces artificial constructs imitating anyone or anything that has passed through its halls in the last 100 years (clones random units from the Anti-Magic Faction *(and any Player Parties that have entered the maze in prior runs) <- only an idea, most likely won't be implemented*)

What are they doing with the artifact?

- They keep it tightly guarded
- Use it for training occasionally, and sometimes let adventurers try their luck inside the maze

When and how did the artifact get to the faction?

- It remained undiscovered inside the heart of a cliff ever since the ancient civilization left it there
- The entrance was covered in a cave in far later, and very likely unrelated to ancient civilization
- It was uncovered after a powerful earthquake

When did the faction discover the artifact?

- More than a hundred years ago, during the time of the last queens great-grandfather

How much does the Faction know about the artifact?

- They only know what they can observe with their eyes
- They have not figured out exactly what the conditions are for people to be replicated as constructs
- No one has ever come close enough to turn it off, if such a thing is even possible

Quests

(*WIP*) Connection to Main Quest (Artifact Quest)

Sequence of Events

Start of the Run

- The city where the Artifact is located is famous, and already marked on the Map (only a very basic description during the first run)
- Only general Direction is known, exact path changes from Run to Run
- The fact that there is an Artifact there is not common knowledge, so first time players might just be unlucky and not discover the Artifact before losing their run

Approaching the City

1. Players hear rumors about a city with excellent smiths
2. As the players get closer to the city, enemies start to be better equipped and merchants have noticeably better weapons and armor
3. When they're 1-2 clearings away from the city, they might hear of rumors that there's something very dangerous near the city outskirts, closely guarded
4. Inside the city, the fact that the Artifact is close by becomes clear

NPCs and Rumors

- **Weary Blacksmith:** *"Steel from that city? Toughest you'll ever find. But there's talk that their skill isn't just from hard work—something down there keeps pushing them forward, whether they like it or not."*
- **Wandering Scholar:** *"There's a ruin near the city. No one's allowed near it. But every so often, figures flicker inside—shadows moving like men. They say it's just tricks of the light. I don't believe that."*
- **Battle-Scarred Mercenary:** *"I knew a man who tried to sneak inside. Next day, someone—something—showed up, fighting just like him. It wasn't him, though. Not anymore."*

Inside the City

Positive Standing with the Faction:

- Players are **welcomed** into the city, free to shop and interact with **special NPCs**.
- The guards **warn** them of the cave's dangers but do not interfere if they attempt entry.
- **Potential Perk:** They may receive **a powerful weapon or armor** as a parting gift.
- Conversation with the **Captain of the Guard** at the Gate of the cave: *"You've got steel in your eyes, outsider. I won't stop you if you wish to test your mettle. But listen well—what lurks in that cave remembers every face it sees. If you fall, you'll fight yourself the next time someone enters. Take this—it may just keep you from becoming a ghost of your own making."*

Neutral Standing with the Faction:

- The city is open for trade, but access to the cave is **denied unless the guards are convinced or bribed**.
- **Combat only begins inside the cave** after the Artifact's influence takes hold.
- Conversation with a **suspicious Guard** at the Gate of the cave**:** *"You think you can just stroll into the depths? No chance. That place is sealed for a reason. Unless you've got something to offer—or a damn good reason—you're not getting past me."*

Negative Standing with the Faction:

- The city gates are **closed** to the player.
- **The guards will attack on sight** if an attempt is made to enter the cave.
- **Combat begins outside the cave**, forcing players to **fight their way in**.
- Conversation with the **Commander of the City Watch** before entering the city**:** *"We don't let your kind through these gates. And if you think you'll set foot near that cave, you'll be dead before you take three steps. Turn around, or die where you stand."*

Combat

Outskirts of the Cave (Artifact is Passive)

- **Enemies wander randomly**, and only attack within range.
- **Enemies spawn slowly** and only after another unit has been defeated.
- **There is no time limit**, allowing careful exploration.
- Guards may **follow the player**—offering assistance or hostility depending on past interactions.

Deeper Within (Artifact is Active)

- **Enemies rush towards the player,** relentlessly attacking the player's units.
- **Enemies spawn rapidly (every 1-3 turns)**, up to a theoretical maximum.
- A **timer starts**, and the player's goal is to survive until the timer runs out.
- Guards, if present, **will retreat the moment the countdown begins**.
- **(Potential Mechanic: The Artifact can be attacked to lower the timer—but doing so is extremely difficult.)**

(*WIP*) Lost Brother of the Queen (Main Faction Quest)

Sequence of Events

- **Quest Trigger**: The quest can be triggered randomly when the player is near Anti-Magic territory, though with higher chances if the player has a positive reputation with the faction.
- **First Encounter with the BotQ**: The Brother of the Queen (BotQ) is a powerful Druid (Healer variant). The first encounter might involve helping him in a fight, but he's strong enough that he doesn't really need help unless it's a late-game encounter: “Appreciate the help, even if it wasn’t necessary against small-fry like this. I’d love to stay and chat, but there are a few grouchy old fools I really don’t want to run into right now. See you later~”
- Shortly after the BotQ leaves, a group of Royal Knights will appear and ask for directions.
  - **If the Player Tells the Truth**: A bonus encounter with the Knights will occur.
  - **If the Player Lies**: The next encounter will be with the BotQ.

Later Encounters

- Subsequent encounters will progressively move closer to the center of the Anti-Magic territory, though the second or third meeting could still be outside of it.

Bonus Encounter with the Knights (Lore-heavy)

- This encounter may involve a combat sequence (unclear) to support the Knights. They will share details about the Tragedy of the Queen’s Death, which led to the country’s descent into chaos and anarchy.
- The Knights will explain who they are searching for and why.

Next Encounter with the BotQ

- The BotQ will recognize the player and invite them to sit with him, likely around a bonfire or in a tavern.
  - **If the Player Had the Bonus Encounter**: Further interactions or lore might be unlocked.

Influence of the Quest on the Faction

- After the second encounter, faction members will be more frequently encountered outside their territory. They will avoid conflict with mages, and in extreme cases, might even cooperate with them.
- **Upon Completion of the Quest**:
  - The faction's council gains an additional member (probably affecting lore).
  - The Royal Knights will return from retirement, providing the faction with more high-level units.
  - The faction’s attitude toward mages will become less hostile. The “Drive Out Mages” quests will be replaced by “Take Care of Mage-Bandits” (name still needs to be workshopped).
  - Mages will occasionally appear as mercenaries, offering support to the faction (very rare).

Effects on Gameplay

- **After the Second Encounter**: Reputation with the faction will increase slightly at each node, as long as the quest isn’t aborted.
- **Upon Completion of the Quest**:
  - Unlock the **Druid Class**.
  - Unlock the **Gremory Class** (Mage + Healer), provided the Magic Faction’s main quest is also completed.