Chapter 11

The Betrayal

The destruction of the Arkturrian Great Council would have left the bear-like Arkturri, reindeer-like Porov, wolflike Voik, and Lynx-like Ruis of the Arkturrian Sovereignty in shambles. The Arkturrian Sovereignty is governed by their Elders, where leadership is placed directly in the hands of selected elders. Villages are run by counsels headed by the eldest Counselor, and the Elder Counselor is responsible for the health and safety of the township.

The Arkturrians never wanted the war. Their proud and principled race lived within their territories, content to protect that which was theirs. Life for an Arkturrian is a balance between restraint and the demonstration of strength. After the Great Trick, when the Iustium launched their attack against the Core World of Veliki Medved, it would have been cowardice not to fight back. To

lose control of one's anger is shameful for an Arkturri, but it is perhaps even more shameful to flee when strength is necessary. Those of the fearsome race that refused to fight in protection of their territory would surely receive the Burnt Orange mark of Cowardice on their sash. Conversely, those who fought bravely or otherwise supported the war earned Sanguine Valor marks or Cerulean Diligence marks, or Honeycomb Temperance marks from military superiors or village elders as punishments.

Despite their virtuous nature, Arkturrians are shrewd business people. They do not enter into deals if they consider them risky or dishonest. They especially do not trust the third party in the three-way Second Unification War. The Umo are an eclectic conglomeration of many different races. Predominantly led by orcs, their ranks include lizard-like Llangardaix, ogres, goblins, and even a handful of dwarves, humans, and half-elves. Unlike the Arkturri whose technology and inflexible logistics are incredibly objective oriented, the Umo are strongly encouraged to pursue a solitary craft for the benefit of the society as a whole. The cultural emphasis is on

the ultimate perfection of the craft, and while mentors and resources exist for their education, seeking out ways to better their craft is ultimately the individual's responsibility.

Tensions between the Arkturri and the Umo have always been high due to their polar opposite worldviews. Where an Arkturrian would sacrifice precision, reliability, and comfort for qualities like speed, power, and utility, an Umo would produce master crafted and elegant goods known across the worlds to be simple, efficient, and incredibly durable. The already strained diplomacy would erupt during the war. The Umo, ever the ones to plot against enemy and ally alike, attempted to manipulate the Arkturrians into fighting the Iustium Elves. Their tampering backfired, however. They were forced into the conflict, struggling against the might of the Empire.

In the end, the Arkturri surrendered to the Empire when the Iustium landed on Veliki Medved and prepared to deploy destructive magics against the Bolshoi Consilium. The leadership knew that their people would not be able to prevail without them.

Rather than see themselves completely annihilated, they joined with the Empire. The Umo could not withstand the combined strength of the Iustium Empire and the Arkturrian Sovereignty. They too laid down their arms two short years later. To this day, a bitterness between the Arkturri and the Umo can still be felt. The Umo Core of Ammon and the hub worlds Jihoska and Endar especially refuse to forget what they consider the worst betrayal in their history. Likewise, most Arkturri think twice before entering into a deal with an Umo.

The Second Unification War, though filled with subterfuge and grief on all sides, was a cornerstone in the history of the Empire. The Iustium Elves now lead three diverse peoples towards the single goal of bettering themselves and the worlds as a whole. With their guidance, wounds could be healed, bonds could be forged, and futures could be grasped. For the glory of the Empire!