The Nine Princedoms

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**The Princedom of Agathon**   
*“In some ways Agathon is all we are, all we hope to be. But underneath there is something undefinable, unknowable, undesirable. Those who dig beneath the grandeur ever return to the surface.”*

The City of Golden Palaces is the most hedonistic, most decadent, most wealthy of all the Princedoms. The Tartarans of Agathon who enjoy a high Status enjoy all that the Nine Princedoms have to offer - from delicacies and slaves to ornamental furniture and magical accoutrements. Those of lesser Status spend most of their days in toil to someone higher than they and tormenting those beneath them, all the while yearning for the pleasures that are just beyond their reach. Life is cheap in Agathon, and everything in Agathon is for sale.

**Customs**   
Agathon has strong relations with several of the other Princedoms, most notably Metathon. Conversely, the Princedoms of Maladon, Orthyrion, and Avernon are held in low regard. Agathon has the highest population of Diabolists of all the Princedoms, and most of the Diabolists are those with high Status. As a result, few non-Diabolists ever rise in the city’s heirarchy. While the flow of Status in some cities is rather fluid, Agathon’s society is actually fairly rigid. Though the city’s detractors claim that a place in society, and accordingly Status, can be purchased here, most of the Agathon’s court are born into their position. Bloodlines frequently take precedence over Wealth, as do Connections. In fact, most Agathonians do not view Wealth as a means to power, but rather an indicator of power.

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| The marketplace of the City of Golden Palaces is an astonishing sprawl of shouting merchants, secluded shops, and strangers from all over the Midnight Realm. Treading upon golden lanes, the air is filled with Ulu scent, burning incence, and the sizzling stench of sulfur. There is a section of the market known as the Black Market wherein Ebonite traders cater to the procurers of black diamonds, black adamant, necromantic paraphernalia, and soulstones.  Adjacent to the Black Market is an area of ramps, small pools, and the shops of the Zoab. The various taverns of the fawning Zoab are frequented by Agathonian slave dealers. Occasionally, Brood slave-handlers can be found in the winding and constricting back alleys, out of sight of the Privileged on the main streets. | |  | | --- | | ***The Ties That Bind***  *Agathon owes much of its prosperity to an ancient trade pact made with in ages past. The benefactors of the City of Golden Palaces are never named, indeed few outside the Court even know they exist. In return for soulstones from Agathon’s market, the benefactors provide the city with costly wines, delicacies, silks, gemstones, and intoxicants. Because of this compact, Agathon deals heavily with the Ebonites and the Zoab.* | | ***The Privileged***  *Those highest in Status in Agathon are known as the Privileged. They live in palaces of gold, from whence the Princedom derives its name, walk upon streets of gold, and even dine from golden vessels. In fact, it is rare indeed that an article of any lesser metal can be found in their possession. Silver and brass are almost unknown amongst the Privileged accept as trinkets to be given to others.* | |

**The Princedom of Avernon**   
*“The citizens of the City of Philosophers are as like to debate your words as answer them with a sword. Often, the entire Court will stay up for days debating some small point of Hierarchical Law and tradition. When they finally come to a consensus, however, it just may be that they have agreed upon your name and have not even yet begun to discuss the matter you brought to them.”*

The City of Philosophers is in some ways quite unlike the other Princedoms. Not only does Avernon possess a traditional neutrality in most Tartaran disputes, but also some of the most ornate and intricate architecture anywhere in the Princedoms. Although the city still maintains a stout wall for defense, manned with able-bodied soldier-scholars, its true power lies within the knowledge it contains. Some have speculated, with no consequence, that some of the city’s design style actually predates the settlement of the Princedom.   
 

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| **Customs**  Though accepting of other creeds, most of the Hierarchy of Avernon are Theosophical Moralists. Many of them ascribe to a belief that Tartarans have become more Diabolical as their collective sins weigh upon them. Only by purifying both the body and the mind through rigorous training and exercise, physical, mental, and moral, can the Tartarans hope to be redeemed. Once they do so, their diabolical features will begin to fade. Typically a viewpoint held by the younger Tartarans, before they become too old and jaded, it does provide the city with an able and willing soldiery as well as a group of innovative thinkers. | |  | | --- | | ***The Library of Avernon***  *Known throughout the Midnight Realm as a repository for arcane tomes, scrolls, tablets, and other mediums, the Library houses texts from all across the Realm and the lower planes. For quite a sizable fee, from which the Hierarchy pays for the Library’s defense and upkeep, the Library’s resources may be used for research purposes; a fact that has drawn many curious and inquisitive beings from all across the lower planes.* | |

With all that the city has to offer, a great number of Sepharans, Ebonites, and Black Savants all call the city their home as well. Some of them have become quite territorially attached to certain sections of the library. In fact, one cabal of Ebonites still claims a small reading room as their own, citing that they paid for research and until that research is complete, they shall remain. The Sepharans frequent the library often as well. Some suspect that the Sepharans are allowed to use the Library at little to no cost in exchange for services rendered the city. Whether those services have already been accomplished or have yet to be enacted is a matter for scholarly debate. The Black Savants seem quite comfortable in Avernon which is perhaps one source of the rumors surrounding the city’s architecture. Nonetheless, it is not uncommon to find a Savant anywhere within the winding streets, open plazas, or crowded marketplaces of the City of Philosophers.

**The Princedom of Colothon**   
*"The Silver City is a very much like this ancient silver knife. Beautiful, deadly effective in times of need, yet the tarnish runs so deep it has become brittle at the edge."*

    Situated between the mountains and the sea, Colothon is another mercantile city. The mountains north of the Princedom are rich in silver ore - the city’s primary source of revenue. The veins of silver which lace the mountains are deep and difficult to mine, but the very material involved offers some scant protection from burrowing Earth Demons that also frequent the depths.  From the forges and metal smiths of Colothon comes the rare argentium - a magical alloy made from silver and other materials.  Every day Colothon sends out workers to delve the mountains in search of more and more ore. Every day a few do not return.   
From its extensive and sprawling docks, the Silver City also maintains a large armada in order to protect its shipments of silver and argentium ingots from both pirates and jealous rivals - among them, the merchants of Othyrion, or so it is said. As a result of their common enmity towards Othyrion, Colothon and Metathon maintain cordial trade relations; however, some Colothonians find the Metathonian attitude towards Agathon to be a sign of weakness.

**Customs**   
    The Silver City has been built on Deeds, not Wealth. Its first Prince was the one who laid claim to Colothon’s sheltered bay. As a result, it was easier for ships to land at Colothon than at some of the other available ports. With the coming of commerce, wealth and status increased. Colothon’s fifteenth Prince found the first extensive vein of silver in the nearby mountains bringing even more wealth to the city. Since that time Colothon has held a tight grip on the production and exportation of argentium from it's shores. She made sure to let only a slow trickle of the valuable alloy seep out into the Midnight Realm. Some of her rivals suspected this was because the veins of ore were lessening, some suspect it was due to a rivalry with one of the past Princes of Golgothon. Now that Azmorrion is in power, some of the rumors have stopped - at least in public.

    Status in Colothon is built heavily upon Deeds and Wealth. Some find the boastful nature of the Colothonians to be somewhat conceited - many a tavern is full of the boastful claims of Colothonian miners and sailors - yet the city has done quite well considering its location and large reliance upon one trade good. Within the city there are several avenues of opportunity for Status. The Colothon Armada provides lowly Tarterans a chance to win a name for themselves serving on the seas, fighting for the city. In addition, there are several smaller, private fleets that protect individual Families shipping rights. These mercenary ships are often small and fast. Rivals of Colothon claim that they are also raiders, blockade-runners, and smugglers - things that the ship’s captains do not neglect to boast of. The deep mines north of the city also provide no less danger and chance for notice. Though frequently staffed by servitor imps, mining crews occasionally take on a few more experienced Tarterans in order to seek out new veins of ore or to eliminate the sporadic Earth Demons who frequent the lower depths.  Merchants and craftsmen also ply their trades in Colothon in an attempt to gather wealth and prestige. While few think of the lowly smelters who process the silver ore, the city’s status would plummet without their constant search for ways to further streamline, purify, and extract the most from their task. Similarly, the enchanters who produce argentium and the merchants who take it to the other Princedoms all are necessary and their attempts at innovation are what drive the wheels of Status in Colothon.

    While the Silver City does contain much that is similar to the other Princedoms, it is notable that the Zoab have no formal presence here. While it is possible to find a few Zoab merchants along the docks and quays of the harbor, there is no place set aside for them in the city. The Brood however are perhaps more prevalent than in other Princedoms, hiring themselves out as mercenaries to the various ships that arrive in port or as miners in some of the deepest shafts. Additionally, it is here in Colothon that many Brood-produced alchemical solutions can be procured. The market of the Silver City not only rings with the cries of Tartaren hawkers, but also with the sibilant demands of the Brood.

**The Princedom of Golgothon**   
*“The Fortress City is very much like one big military camp. It is clean, organized, regimented. It is strong, resilient, and merciless. It is very much like a crystal, ready to crack under the immense pressure pounding upon it.”*

    Both feared and respected throughout the Midnight Realm, Golgothon is a city under martial law. Located along one of the passes through the Black Spire Mountains in the middle of the Iron Valley, the Fortress City is a stalwart defender of the northern lands against the incursions of Demonkind.

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| Citizens of Golgothon are considered members of the militia upon reaching the age of adulthood and are thus under the jurisdiction of the military. Crimes are handled by court martial, with typical sentences being sent to the arena, banished to the Fallen Lands, or dispatched to serve in Maladon. Armed patrols walk the streets seeking to drum others into service in order to fill out the ranks before battles. This 'civil patrol' apprehends those whose behavior is in the slightest deviation from Hierarchy standards. Anything from loitering, to public drunkenness, to theft can earn the attention of a patrol. | |  | | --- | | ***The Civil Patrol***  *In Golgothon, several elite military units patrol the streets to keep order. Comprised of violent, and often rash, bullies, the Civil Patrol arrests large numbers of all manner of creatures daily in Golgothon. Tartarans of high status and Golgothon citizens can often bribe, bluff, or threaten their way out of any sort of trouble; others wind up serving the city in various other ways: cleaning the streets, repairing the city's massive walls, performing in the arena, or serving in the Last Legion.* | |

    Those hardy enough to survive preemptive strikes against the Demons and wily enough to not get caught by the civil patrol, can occasionally rise through the ranks of the military. Golgothon has the strongest military of all the Nine Princedoms, and the most aggressive commanders. Golgothon military units are occasionally hired out as mercenary troops.

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| The proximity of Mount Ziggurat to the north of the city attracts treasure seekers and artifact hunters of all types. Golgothon has a standing bounty for any relics brought out of the immense mound, but few ever make it into the city's market. Though the marketplace of the Fortress City is frequented by both Zoab and Ebonite traders seeking black diamonds, and other Tartarans seeking mercenaries and weapons, Golgothon is far from wealthy. A colossal expenditure of the city's coffers goes towards outfitting its troops and the constant repairs necessary for the continuation of Golgothon’s defense.  Typically, Golgothon relies upon tribute from the other Princedoms, notably Maladon, for part of its income and gathers the rest in spoils from battle and a tithe from its mercenary units. | |  | | --- | | ***The Last Legion***  *A rag-tag motley of low Status Tartarans, maimed Brood, Zoab slaves, Gargoyles, and others, the Last Legion are Golgothon’s dumping ground and front-line expendable soldiers. Although they typically suffer near catastrophic losses in every conflict they are in, there are always a few survivors who manage to train the next batch of “recruits.” Some of Golgothon’s Hierarchy can even claim to have once served in the Last Legion, though none would ever willingly admit it.* | |

**The Princedom of Maladon**   
*“Maladon? Never been there. No one who is any one has ever been there. I’m surprised you even bring it up in such esteemed company.”*

    Stranded between the perforated Mountains of Midnight, slouching beside the Iron River, looking out over the haunted Bay of Mists sits the City of Iron Walls, the Tarnished Crown, the Princedom of Maladon. Situated farther north than any of the other Princedoms, Maladon is less of a city than a besieged citadel. Populated by the dregs of Tartaran society, by those who have fallen from the heights of Status, banished from other Princedoms, or on the run from the law, the city has poor reputation among the other Princedoms; in addition, its location adds to its sense of ill repute. The towering Mountains of Midnight are riddled through by earth demons, while the skies above are frequented by night demons. The Iron River is intermittently occupied by magma demons while the Bay of Mists into which it empties is abode to mist demons, among other, more dangerous things. Maladon is prepared for all of this. Reserves from Golgothon arrive frequently to bolster the city’s walls. Its towering walls are plated with iron and covered with silver tipped merlons. From afar, some say the best place from whence to view Maladon, the city resembles a darkened silver crown of thorns.

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| Yet life in the City of Iron Walls is not without its rewards. The tunnels of the Mountains of Midnight are occasionally littered with the gemstone refuse of the Earth Demons, the Iron River provides a steady supply of iron for weapons and armor, and constant battles against Demonkind can lead to a rise in Status. Despite the opinions of the other Princedoms, Maladonians tend to be rather arrogant. They live in the constant threat presented by Demonkind and as such frequently come to see themselves as the pinnacle of Tartaran society, no doubt due to the great number of Material Realists that make Maladon their home. | |  | | --- | | ***The Imps of Maladon***  *There are several bands of younger imps that scurry throughout the city's winding passages and narrow streets, frequently falling upon individuals in a raucous swarm of questions, riddles, philosophical and fashion commentary only to depart as quickly as they came normally leaving behind a victim with a slightly lighter pouch. Some bands are even audacious enough to attempt the theft of weapons and armor. Should one be quick enough to catch one of the Daring, however, it is possible to strike a deal. Each band accumulates not only an amazing array of trinkets and coinage, but also a high degree of information about the city and visitors therein.* | |

**Customs**   
Due to the martial and philosophical nature of Maladon, it is perhaps unsurprising that Deeds are important part of Maladonian society. It may come as a surprise to outsiders however to find that the denizens of the Iron Walls hold Honor in high regard as well. For many Tartarans here everything else has been stripped from them and the basics of Hierarchic Law are all that is left.   
In the dense confines of the Citadel of Maladon, there is seemingly little room for frivolity or vice. Most of the wealth therein is often exported to other Princedoms or held miserly tight by individual owners. Individual Maladonians rarely display wealth openly, but the interiors of their homes are occasionally opulent in a spartan sense. Rich hardwood benchs, plates adorned with gems, luxuriant rugs woven of hair or demon-hide.

Few Zoab even venture to journey here, instead relying upon Tartaran merchants to make the dangerous trek to this northern Princedom. Of note however is a small enclave of poor Zoab appraisers. This small, wretched drove are little like their more urbane counterparts in the southern cities, but are quite adapt at both mercantile and martial endeavors. Also present is an enclave of Black Savant scholars who frequently assist the Maladonians in arcane matters. Existing almost in the shadow of the Black Savants, are a group of Ebonites. While the Ebonites rarely have any sort of dealings with the Tartarans, they are nearly always found in close proximity to the Savants, for reasons they refuse to disclose. Brood slavers occasionally appear in the Citadel's marketplace to barter night demon slaves or trade for various gemstones, but rarely stay for long.

**The Princedom of Malapharon**   
    *"Ahh, Malapharon, City of Guildhouses. Home of Merchant Lords and Craftsman Kings, where backroom alliances are shattered by handshake deals in the streets. From squalid slave-pens to silver-chased palaces, the entire Princedom is shaped by a complex net of ruthless business and back-biting politics."*

    Malapharon, also known as either the Trade Capital of the Nine Princedoms or the First City, is a city of commerce. It is an active port city that is frequented by vessels not only from across the Midnight Realm, but the Lower Planes as well. On any given day, it is possible to find Zoab merchants dealing in exotica and intoxicants, Ebonite traders offering homonculi and alchemical wares, and Black Savants selling black adamant. In return, such strange and daring traders are able to procure black diamonds, silver ingots, demonic slaves, and even more unusual wares. Aside from Porphyrion, it is here that the majority of the daily wares of the Tarterans originate. Progressing upwards from the docks to the heights of Malapharon's citadel are various wards, each containing the shops, factories, and warehouses of several Trade Houses in a strange order that few non-Malapharions can begin to grasp. Property within the city is subject to lucrative trade and exchange, just as the various wares within its buildings are. Indeed, foreign travelers may find at a shop one business at which to sale their goods in the morning, but by evening a completely different enterprise may reside within. Malapharon is prosperous, but there is a dark side to its security and wealth. Its a haughty, ruthless, and cutthroat land bustling with commercial intrigues. Tarteran nobles here look down on the poor and all outsiders. Coins make for instant friends in Malapharon's court and lack of coins makes them disappear just as swiftly. The locals have come to expect corruption in high places. Underhanded dealings are permissible and even admired - but outright theft and arson are abhorred, and justice can be harsh. Malapharon maintains active ties, politically, commercially, and socially, with Agathon and as such can be expected to generally side with that Princedom in case of disputes with the other Princedoms. Othyrion on the other hand has earned the active disdain of Malapharon, perhaps because it is the closest thing to a rival Malapharon has and an active challenge to the Princedom’s status. Any outspoken allies of Othyrion draw glares from Malapharions.

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| **Customs**      The First City, so-called because it is supposedly the first settlement constructed by the Tarterans in the Midnight Realm, is a city of trade. And yet, the Traditions of Hierarchical Law are imposed upon every deal entered into within the walls of Malapharon. Indeed, long ago while the city was home to nearly all Tarterans the ruling Prince forced those who wished to trade and bargain in the city to swear an oath to treat all business deals as binding oaths, all customers as equals. After the formation of the other Princedoms, some Tarterans thought that the Binding the Prince had made would mean the swift collapse of Malapharon once other markets opened up, but time has shown that that is not so. Malapharion merchants are some of the most respected merchants in the Lower Planes - which is not to say that they are the most trusted. The Binding only holds them to the letter of the law, not the spirit, and thus the Malapharions do their best to take every advantage they can. In addition to being adept at the building of wares, all Malapharion Merchants are also skilled at the creation of agreements, contracts, and written terms of sale. Especially skilled are a Family now known as the Auditors. | |  | | --- | | ***The Binding***  *Legend has it that this agreement was placed upon all trade within the walls of Malapharon by its Prince ages ago. Occasionally the Head of a Trade House will be asked to again make the vow in front of the Prince, though the reasons why vary. Traditionally the oath is one in which the forsworn claims to treat all customers as equal in status, with all the strictures that Hierarchical Law entail for such. Philosophers from Avernon still debate whether such an Oath can have any binding hold over all members of a House or whether, if the legend is true, all Tarterans are bound by such.*  ***The Auditors***  *Reputedly the scions of a House that fell out of favor with the Prince for breaking the Binding, this Family specializes in keeping track of the varying tides of Status of all the Houses, Families, and individual Tarterans in the city of Malapharon. In addition, they are also skilled legalists and keep track of the massive number procedural and legal Oaths brought to them in the city. Anyone can hire one of the Auditors, but their fee goes directly into the coffers of the Prince. It is said that  the Auditors were scions of one of the Houses. Now, however, they have insinuated themselves into every level of Malapharon's daily life. Now the Auditors are everywhere, they see everything, they take note of everything. The rise and fall of Status in the city is recorded on a daily basis by the Auditors and now even other Princedoms are asking for use of these shrewd and insightful scribes. Many pretend to dislike the ink-stained Auditors, but it is through them that an extensive web of spies, blackmailers, and informants in the city exist.* | |

    Businesses in Malapharon are somewhat unstable affairs. As an individual increases or decreases in Status they may decide that their current business location is unsuitable. Given the sheer number of individual merchants, merchant families, and Trade Houses within the city, it is obvious that not everyone can be in the best location at the same time. The popularity of certain locales waxes and wanes with the mood of the city. Such as a certain street close enough to the docks to get goods rapidly, yet not so close as to deal with the cries of the boatmen and sailors, or an alley near the Citadel of the Prince, yet not so prominent as to offend by its proximity.

    Status in Malapharon is most often determined by Wealth. However, it is not just the accumulation of riches, but also how those riches are used. Simply acquiring and hording wealth is a start, but more status is conferred by the uses of wealth as well. As such, having a lavish household is a start, having enough to treat potential clients to a meal is step, but ultimately bribes, hired assassins and spies, and underbidding all mark the upper-end of the Hierarchy here. There have also been cases of social manuevering to out-flank rivals; the Red Hand Family once married off its elder son to the lower Status Dark Blade Family in order to prevent them from gaining a higher Status in the weapon-making House Kalash. Views of non-Tarterans likewise affect the location of a business: some of the more prominent Malapharions dislike accepting non-Tarterans as equals and thus take a location far from the docks; others choose to stay closer to the outsiders in order to conduct their business.

    Individual Trade Houses each focuses at a certain type of craft, be it weapons, various types of works of art, foodstuffs, drink, armor, architecture, bookmaking. Each of these Houses compete for the favor of the Prince as well as for lucrative trade routes, shipping lanes, business space, and Status. Within each House, there is a Family that concerns itself with a particular type or style of their House’s craft. Each of these families compete with one another for the very same things their House competes for in the city, but on a smaller scale. Another notch down the ladder are the individual craftsmen and merchants within each Family. While few merchants specialize in just one thing, Malapharion craftsmen may specialize in singular types of items, refining and stylizing their wares as a signature of their skill. Thus, one craftsman may create intricate puzzle boxes within which to hold treasures. He works to gain the attention of the head of his family, who in turn might ply his wares to gain increased status for the family within the house. The head of the house then uses the best of those goods to earn the favor of the Prince, sell to traveling merchants, or export to others of the Princedoms. All of this yields a very competitive market that on its surface is a placid veneer of civility and decorum.

    Along the edges of the waterfront are various ghettos where some of the other prominent races of the Midnight Realm gather while in Metathon. The Zoab borough is an extravagent place by Malapharon standards; however, much of the similarities end at the facade. While many of the lower Status Malapharions deal extensively with the Zoab, the Zoab’s lack the sense of honor and status that the upper crust of Malapharon demands.  The Sepharan quarter is patrolled fairly heavily by well-paid guards.  The Sepharan Rune Cult maintains an extensive presence here in Malapharon, reputedly to study the history of the arrival of Tartarans in the Midnight Realm and what they their future here holds. The Ebonite district lies in the shadow of the Prince’s Citadel. The streets between the windowless towers and shops of the Ebonites are covered with sheets of shale dredged up from the bay. Few who cannot see in the dark enter these dank warrens for the Ebonites permit no source of light within their darkened streets.  The Brood ghetto is another area few Tarterans enter willingly. Filled not only with the despicible Brood, but the very dregs of Malapharon society hide in this strangely illuminated labyrinth of hovels and shops as well.

**The Princedom of Minauron**   
    *"Do not speak ill of it. Everywhere they have ears. Everywhere they have eyes. Stolen senses, borrowed time. Do not attract their attention, and you may yet live a prosperous life."*

    Unlike other Princedoms, Minauron's rulers are confessed thieves and former smugglers who realized that they could become richer if they became the government instead of always fighting the government. Other covert operatives have difficulties evading its authorities, who have done it all before. Least prosperous of the Nine Princedoms in terms of material resources, Minauron's Prince and his followers survive mainly by wit and guile. They maintain a vast network of spies and informants, using blackmail and intimidation to undermine their potential rivals and thwarts their enemies. Their Emissaries are considered among the most skilled and subtly effective agents in the entire Midnight Realm.   
    Othyrion pays Minauron large sums for information about its rival, Malapharon, which is forced to counter this situation by paying Minauron for information about Othyrion. This arrangement has been quite lucrative for the Minauron Hierarchy, though a result, they are not trusted by other Tarterans.   
    The Minauronians have spent decades seeking a safe caravan route across the Plains of Wroth to Malapharon. Through years of painstaking work their dregs and slaves created a chain of caravanserais at oases in the Plains. The Tarterans  have fought for decades against the dangerous flora and fauna but they hold only the land on which they stand at any given moment.

**The Princedom of Othyrion**   
*“Some would call the Port of Free Traders a miserable den of scum and treachery, home to pirates, cut-throats, smugglers, and assassins. A vile hole that few care to visit, and fewer still manage to leave. Some would be correct.”*

    The second settlement of the Tartarans shows its age. Situated at one navigable end of the Black Spire Mountains along the coast, its towers and walls are worn and etched by the foul airs; its streets are dark, dank, and fetid; the very air above the city is filled with the choking, acidic burn of alchemical by-products. Of all the Princedoms, laws and legality are the loosest here, and many members of its Hierarchy are seen as corrupt. The city’s marketplace is known as a haven for disreputable merchants and undesirables from across the lower planes. Willingness to cut any deal has helped the city grow into a major economic power, but it has also created an environment in which thieves view their activities as extensions of normal business by other means. Assassins, extortionists, enforcers, and spies are for sale to any, meaning that those who typically oppose the thieves are frequently their best clients.

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| **Customs**  The Tartarans of Othyrion are quite miserly. They will haggle over the meanest little detail, scrounge for the most wretched piece of plunder to sell, and stretch out supplies with counterfeit or diluted wares. Othyrions will go to almost any length, do nearly anything, to rise above a adversary. Almost since its inception, Othyrion and its Material Realists have been  rivals to Metathon.  That the Othyrions seldom hide their distrust of others, or their questionable business practices from outsiders has resulted in the other Princedoms seeing the city as something of a cultural backwater. Despite, or perhaps in spite of, this the Port of Free Traders is the most active port in the Nine Princedoms . . . after Malapharon. | |  | | --- | | ***Othyrion Merchants***  *Unwilling to trust cargo too far out of their sight, many Othryian merchants travel with their goods, whether over land or over sea. Always on the look out for new opportunities and a quarter argent, Free Traders frequently attack any rivals they think they can overpower without suffering too great a loss. If they sense any profit will be made from a venture, they typically attempt it. It therefore comes as no surprise that Othyrion ships put on a brash front when encountering another vessel.* | |

    Only the bravest, strongest, or most cruel merchants drive their cargo in through Othyrion's formerly flourishing port. Even so, the port is at least as busy as it was during ages past, which says something about how many brave and unscrupulous merchants roam the Midnight Sea. The squalid port of Othyrion is a place one does not go without some form of protection, whether magical or mundane. Frequented by roaming bands of Brood Slavers, Zoab slaves, and Gargoyle dockworkers, it is no place for the timid or weak-willed.

**The Princedom of Porphyrion**   
*“The City of Enchanted Towers is a wonder to behold. There is perhaps no place more magical in all the Realm. Each of its citizens is skilled in some sort of magical craft - whether in defense of the city or in the interest of commerce. All of that magical energy, flowing and swirling and ebbing. Good reason to stay far, far away.”*

    The City of Enchanted Towers is indeed a stronghold of magical knowledge, second perhaps only to Avernon among the Tartaran Princedoms. Much of that knowledge has been poured into the production of magical arms and armors, amulets and artifacts. Gremlin artificers toil every hour of the day and night in the city’s smelters, factories, workshops, and laboratories. Porphyrion is the supplier of nearly all Tartaran enchanted arms and armor. Consequently, they maintain a close eye on shipping routes of raw materials: iron from Maladon, silver and argentium from Colothon, alchemical wares from Othyrion, and so forth. The Princedom of Golgothon is perhaps their biggest client, purchasing not only enchanted blades and armor, but also the traditional argentium masks of the Demon Hunters. Citizens of Porphyrion are proud of their city’s crafts. The quickest way to cause trouble here is to sell inferior merchandise, or, worse, inferior merchandise with the claim that it was produced here.

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| **Customs**  Porphyrion’s Hierarchy is largely composed of Magical Pragmatists, many of whom are artificers or traders in enchanted items and oversee the various aspects of magical production in the city. Many Tartaran spiritcatchers also originate from the Enchanted Towers, using the arcane knowledge they have gleaned to capture souls in various locales around the Midnight Realm. | |  | | --- | | ***Spritcatchers***  *Tartaran Spiritcatchers use enchanted devices produced in Porphyrion to capture roaming souls within amberglass vials or spheres. Others use ancient incantations, which, though perhaps more reliable are also more dangerous. From various locales such as Spiritfall Mountain and the Sea of Lost Souls, they harvest their grisly quarry and bring them to market. The entire enterprise is fraught with dangers, the least of which comes from the prey itself.* | |

    The Arena of Porphyrion is patronized nearly daily, but instead of duels of honor, or trial by combat, here the artificers test new applications of arcane knowledge and weapon smith creations.  The noxious fumes from the city’s various alchemical laboratories, smelters, and factories lends the air in the southern part of the city a particularly disquieting color. Servitor imps and sickly gremlins can be frequently found unconscious in the gutters of the city’s streets, choked and asphyxiated from their work.

    Porphyrion has a sizable population of Ebonites, Sepharans, and Black Savants, but relatively few Brood or Zoab. Brood rarely visit the city, and those that do stay only long enough to conduct their business in the market before heading on their way once more. Most of the non-Tartaran population is forced to live near either near the market or near the city’s massive gatehouse.