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# STARFALL

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(Working Title)

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DEVELOPING NEW WORLDS: ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Under the Instruction of Thomas Lucas

## **STORY PREMISE**

The Age of Peace is coming to an end.

The world has been unified for the last thousand years. Technology has leapt forward, lifespans have stretched further, and war is a thing of the past. However, the stars are beginning to disappear. Glowing stones appear before the chosen of humanity. The chosen who will battle to determine the new course of the world.

Each of The Chosen is imparted with the power of legends. They battle in the shadows of society in a grand tournament. The winner will decide the path of humanity and craft the world as they see fit.

Morgan is Chosen as The Black Swordsman, gifted with powers he can't understand and thrust into a war for which he is ill-prepared. He'll either have to fight to create a world of his own or die as a sacrifice for someone else's.

## HISTORY

The history of this Earth is, on the surface, not too different from our own. However, the myths and legends of humanity bear a greater measure of truth to them than we first realized. Tales of gods and heroes were often the results of conflicts between those known as “Chosen.”

Chosen are people who have been deemed worthy to bear the power of a magical crystal called Asterite, claimed to be the power of the heavens given solid form. One form of asterite, called red asterite, imparted upon the chosen the abilities and traits we associate with heroes and gods. These powers are drawn out from the power of human conception. Asterite draws upon the concepts that exist in the human psyche, both individually and collectively, and makes those concepts real. The use of Asterite to gain the powers of a heroic spirit is called “mantling.”

Those able to use Asterite have engaged in local conflicts, seeking to impose their will upon the area around them and one another through the establishment of a “Domain.” Some fought for noble reasons, and some for more sinister motives, but with each battle, their conflicts and the resulting domains grew in scope.

In 1970 the world had grown more interconnected than ever before. Hence the resulting battle between the Chosen was not over the fate of a tribe, or a region, or even a nation but for the world. This battle was won by the chosen wielding the power of Hercules. With this power, he set out to reforge the world according to his vision — a world where the exceptional could shine and where societal strife would be done away with. By 1990, through a series of conquests and political maneuvers, the man who would be known as Aurelius Ceaser had united the world under his rule in the “Imperium Aeterna.”

From that point, he set about reforming things in his image, building sprawling metropolises, encouraging learning in the arts and sciences, and advancing technology. His reign has lasted for a millennium, with society making significant advancements. Yet, those who find the Imperial rule suffocating, those who were looked at as useless, or those who wish to chart their own path were discarded and forgotten, forced to live in the shadows of society.

It is in this world that Red Asterite begins to appear once more, seeking out new Chosen. The new Chosen represents both hope and danger. Each one represents an upheaval of the world order, for better or for worse. Each one has their dreams, their ideal world they would gladly replace the Imperium Aeterna with. They are drawn to one another, and their battle will determine the path the world will take.

# MAIN CHARACTER

## **Morgan Ward**

**Heroic Spirit: Mordred Pendragon**

**Weapon: Holy Longsword Clarent**

Our main character is Morgan “Morty” Ward. He’s a young man adrift in life. He’s unsure of what to do with his future or if he’s needed in the world

However, this passive drifting ends abruptly when a gem of red Asterite finds its way to him. In a dream a shadowy figure appears before him, offering the gem and through it the chance to make his dreams come true. He accepts the deal, and the asterite becomes a part of his body, granting him the powers of the Dark Knight, Mordred Pendragon.

In his typical day to day, Morgan is a young man of about average height. He has light brown skin and dark black hair. He typically dresses dark clothes, of a formal make, long-sleeved shirts, dark jackets, and pants. In the Summer Morgan wears a tie and a scarf in the winter. However, he typically also wears them in a very relaxed style.

When Morgan mantles Mordred to become the Black Knight, his skin becomes darker, and his eyes turn red. His hair grows wild and stark white. His clothing remains the same, though with small red Celtic knot patterns. He gains gauntlets and greaves made of dark metal. He also gains access to the sacred sword Clarent, otherwise known as the Sword in the Stone. It appears to be made of the same dark metal as his armor, with rose gold filigree. When he channels his power through the blade, it glows a bright white.

In personality, Morgan can be a bit cold. He’s rarely rude but not particularly open either. He can be a bit slow to trust, but after he’s gained a friend, he’s shockingly loyal. Morgan tends to value rationality and logic. He rarely rushes into a situation and tends to look down on those he feels are foolhardy or brash. However, when pushed too far, Morgan can overreact. As a rule, he hates cruelty, especially needless cruelty, viewing it as the worst possible trait a person can have. This makes it all the more difficult when he realizes that due to his coldness and indifference, he can come off as quite cruel himself. His favorite trait is nobility. Although he will critique and deride it, someone who is willing to stand by their ideals and do what is right without stepping on those beneath them is what he views as being genuinely heroic.

## **SUPPORTING CHARACTERS**

### **Xavier Couture**

**Heroic Spirit Anansi The Spider**

**Weapon: Unbreakable Threads**

**Ideal world: World of Solitude**

Xavier is a quintessential man of mystery. He sophisticated and well-spoken, charismatic, and enticing, yet with a dark air or danger to him. When speaking with him, there's always the sense that Mr. Couture is just a few steps ahead. When he smiles, it feels like walking down the stairs on a dark night and realizing there was one less than you thought. As Morgan's mentor, he's a figure who is simultaneously impressive, mystifying, and unnerving.

His relationship with Morgan is complicated. He sees a lot of himself in the young man and desires to guide and nurture him in the hopes Morgan will not fall into the same pitfalls Xavier had in life. However, Mr. Couture is also a self-centered and scheming individual. He is willing to put Morgan in danger or selectively withhold information if it serves his further goals. It's not because he views others as being lesser or beneath him, but rather that he is wholly devoted to his goals and plans, willing to make any sacrifice required.

Xavier is a man approaching middle age with a surprisingly good physique. He has dark skin, and his eyes are a bright gleaming violet. His head is shaved and smooth, though he's grown a short, well-groomed, salt and pepper chinstrap. He tends to dress very fashionably, usually in sleek maroon suits with a splash of color. His clothes are embroidered with web patterns around the cuffs and hems. Oddly, when he mantles, he does not change in appearance. This makes it almost impossible to determine when and where he might be using his powers. His weapon of choice is a multitude of nearly unbreakable threads. He can change their shape, size, thickness, and color. He is also able to weave the threads into objects, disguises, or weapons at a whim.

Xavier's ideal world is a world of Solitude. Each person lives surrounded by imaginary people as places within their ideal. It's essentially a grand illusion where everyone can live the perfect life that they imagine and never hurt or upset the world of another. It is also a world in which everyone will, in truth be completely alone.

### **Katherine "Kat" King**

**Heroic Spirit: Jeanne d'Arc**

**Weapon: Holy Spear Longinus**

**Ideal World: Communal World**

Katherine is a young woman with an incredibly sincere heart. She tends to be driven by her passion, acting first, and thinking later. Katherine is shockingly empathic and perceptive of those around her. Not only that, but she's incredibly athletic and quite beautiful. She has a boundless capacity to hope, and an iron will to never to give up or give in. Her greatest strength is her kind heart, which gives her a natural charisma that makes it easy for her to rally and inspire others.

Katherine is a girl who could genuinely be called blessed, an idea that makes her feel quite uncomfortable. The fact that so many things come so easily to her makes her believe she's just lucky. She worries that all the things she achieves are not due to her worth or hard work but rather a sort of cosmic fluke. Her worry drives her to try and make her gifts of use to others. However, it also causes her to doubt her self-worth and sometimes fall into self-destructive sacrificial behavior.

Katherine and Morgan have a complicated relationship. Katherine sees Morgan as cynical and unmotivated, unwilling to use his abilities for the greater good. Morgan, in turn, sees her as being a bit preachy and naïve, continually sticking her nose in where it doesn't belong. That said, they both also find the other somewhat inspiring.

Katherine thinks Morgan can be more softhearted than he lets on, and she appreciates his quick wit and ability to keep a calm head. Morgan, in turn, finds her honesty devotion to be refreshing. At times the two find themselves fighting against one another, but they're quick to ally when the circumstances are right

Katherine Tends to dress in a sporty and active fashion. She wears her brown hair in a short pixie cut. Her eyes are also a rich brown, as are the freckles dotting her cheeks. She wears shorts, tank-tops, and bright athletic blazers or windbreakers. For footwear, she wears sneakers and knee-high socks.

When Katherine is mantling, she wears a sky-blue robe. Over the gown, she wears a breastplate of milky white armor, engraved with golden images of flowers, deer, and the sun. Katherine also wears golden chain mail, gauntlets, greaves, slightly heeled boots, and a circlet. She wields a hoy spear named Longinus, said to have pierced the side of Christ. It is patterned like a flowering vine and glows with a faint soft light.

# LOCATIONS

## **Regional Capital: Aventopolis “City of the New World”**

Aventopolis is the regional capital of North America under the Imperium Aeterna. After Washington D.C. surrendered to the Armies of the Imperium, it was torn down and rebuilt utterly to serve as capital of the North American continent. Many of the monuments and important buildings already borrowed heavily from roman styles of architecture, so they were merely altered. The City is now dotted with massive marble white skyscrapers in a mix of Art Deco and Neoclassical style. Each of these skyscrapers functions as a self-contained arcology providing food, work, and energy for its inhabitants. Due to this, each arcology tends to develop a unique subcultural style. These unique traditions and customs are tolerated by the empire as long as they don't flout against the broader traditions of the Imperium Aeterna.

## **The Parlor “Anansi's Domain”**

The Parlor is the domain of Xavier Couture, manifested through his heroic spirit Anansi. It takes the form of a French-influenced Caribbean villa basking in the glows of a red and violet sunset. As this place is Xavier's domain, it is entirely under his control and can reform according to his desires. Each room in the villa leads only to where he desires it to be. He can shift and change its layout as he requires. Anansi most often takes his guests in his parlor, hence the name. He also has various libraries, weapon rooms, dining halls, and workshops.



**Neo Domus Aurea**  
**“Aurelius Ceaser’s Domain”**

Neo Domus Aurea is the domain of the Great Emperor of the Imperium Aeterna. It is modeled after the palace of Emperor Nero and meant to represent not only the heart of Aurelius Ceaser but also his vision for the world. It is a palace of gold, both classical and futuristic. It overflows with luxuries of every kind. The outer palace grounds are a died expanse of gardens, filled with animals from all over the world. Each has been perfectly trained to obey Aurelius. This palace is nature perfectly placed in submission to civilization; harnessed but not eradicated. There is no sun, with all the light radiating from the gold of the palace itself. Day and night are determined by which part of the palace is shining brightest.





## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Chosen**

The Chosen are those who have become one with a gem of Red Asterite. They gain the ability to summon power from within their soul into reality to create matter and energy. The chosen's power will manifest in the form of a Heroic Spirit, a representation of human legends and heroes. Each person will bear only one heroic spirit. A spirit can reoccur but will typically only do so after the current Chosen wielding that spirit dies. Each manifestation is unique to the individual, exemplifying the traits and characteristics that chosen resonates with most.

A Chosen calls upon the power of their spirit through a process called "Mantling." Mantling can change the physical appearance, abilities, and even the mindset of the chosen. Each Heroic Spirit gives different boons to its Chosen, usually based on the legends that spirit originates from as well as what their Chosen needs. However most chosen are given a long life, increased strength, superhuman durability, and the ability to manifest a domain. As a chosen becomes more in tune with their heroic spirit, their powers, and the extent of their domain will grow.

### **Domain**

A domain is a space that exists as a counterpart to the material world. Domains appear in locations that have great significance either to an individual or to a group, as they manifested from the human mind. Domains grow or shrink in relation to both the cognitive importance of the location and the magical power of who holds this cognition. Domains are usually inaccessible to humanity, as their entryways are invisible, though they can enter these realms while they dream. Magi and the Chosen are the exceptions, able to actively create their domain or enter the domain of others. While awake and physical. Battles between Chosen are traditionally held within a domain, so they minimize damage in the "real world." The Battles between Chosen are often to extend the influence and power of their domain. By doing so, they can impress their will upon the real world as well.

### **Asterite**

Asterite is a special crystal that falls from the heavens. It concentrates human hopes and desires into a physical form which can create an immense amount of energy. They could be thought of as the stars that carry people's wishes. Asterite comes in several different varieties

### **Red Asterite**

Red Asterite is the variety that creates chosen. It falls from the sky in the vicinity of whoever has the proper capability to become a "Chosen": people who have a particularly powerful wish or desire.

When Red Asterite makes contact with a Chosen, they usually see a dream or vision, with a figure offering the crystal to them. If they accept the Gem becomes a part of

their body, and they gain the ability to “mantle” calling upon the powers of a “heroic spirit” a specific manifestation of a legendary figure birthed from within the soul of the Chosen. Because the manifestation emerges from the soul of the Chosen, it is possible -though exceedingly rare- for two chosen to manifest the same heroic spirit. However, even then, the spirits will typically highlight different aspects of the same figure from one another. In general, a heroic spirit will only re-occur after the death of the previous chosen to summon them.

### **White Asterite**

After a chosen has been killed, their body will turn to asterite and drain of color, changing from red to white. Red Asterite does not have the power to manifest a heroic spirit. However, it does still retain the ability to channel magical forces. Thus White Asterite is less powerful and less unique than Red, but also much more versatile.

It can be crafted into implements that allow people to wield and use magic, typically in the form of an amulet or ornament. Not only that, but it is an energy source for technology previously thought to be unfeasible. Eighty percent of the White Asterite is under the control of the Empire, and while it is not exactly a secret, it is typically only explained to those who are considered talented enough to wield it. That is primarily those involved with the development of new technology or who show the skill and creativity to become excellent magi.



### **Black Asterite**

White Asterite, unlike red, does not become part of the body, remaining as a separate tool. Almost all attempts to do so have resulted in death. However, in the rare case of survival, the Asterite changes in color becoming black. Black Asterite is

a bit more similar to red, but the manifestations that emerge from the spirit tend to be dark and twisted, summoning a legendary monster instead. Almost everyone who manages to do so becomes mad, some at a faster rate than others. However, their powers grow exponentially. Even one represents a massive danger, and the longer that danger is left unaddressed, the more significant it becomes.

### **The Grand Star**

The grand star is the heart of all Asterite. Each of the pieces that come to earth is merely a chip from this magnificent crystal. It exists beyond the physical world, within the Domain of Humanity. Each chosen can pull part of the Grand Star to themselves in the form of Red Asterite. However, no one to this point has been able to draw the Grand Star into the physical world. The goal of Aurelius Ceaser is to pull the Grand Star into the physical world and use it to make his empire genuinely eternal.

## STORY SYNOPSIS

Morgan is a young man adrift in life. He wishes, more than anything, to finally know who he is and what he is meant to do. Then, one night, in a dream he is approached by a mysterious Black Knight approaches him, offering a glowing gem of Red Asterite and with it an answer to what he is looking for. Morgan accepts and becomes one of the Chosen.

He initially dismisses this as nothing more than a dream and attempts to go about his life once more. However, after being drawn into a domain, Morgan realizes that his dream was real, and he now finds himself in a position for which he feels woefully underprepared. Morgan must now try to discover the source of these mysterious monsters as well as learning to defend himself against other Chosen.

He slowly gains powers, allies, and rivals learning more about the world they wish to create as well and pondering who he should support if anyone at all. He realizes that his spirit, the Black Knight, is that of the traitorous Mordred Pendragon, which profoundly disturbs him. However, he decides what matters is not who he was, but who he is willing to become. Morgan deals with the source of the Black Asterite before focusing his effort against the Imperium. After a great battle Morgan is able to lay claim to the Grand Asterite. He decides its power meant to defend humanity not to rule them. Morgan then seeks to rally the Chosen to this cause.

## STORY EXCERPT

Morgan fell flat on his back as Clarent went clattering to the ground. Above him slithered his opponent. This sinister figure with the body of a man yet the head of a king cobra and from the waist down had the long, scaled body of a serpent. His scales shimmered like emeralds, and his thin slit eyes glowed as if aflame.

The snake-man slithered towards Morgan on his long serpentine tail. His tongue darting in and out of his mouth savoring the air. The heat of battle. The coppery taste of oozing blood, the salt of dripping sweat, and the cold, slimy delectable delicacy of fear. He spun his long spear, the tip sharp, jagged like a maw of mangled teeth, and dripping with a viscous liquid.

Morgan sprung to his feet and scrambled for Clarent. His hand curled around the grip, and he pointed it roughly toward the Snake-man.

The snake just laughed, a rocky raspy rattle as it beheld the blade. "Oh, little boys and their toys. Wave that little knife about all you want. Every second you live, you grow more desperate, more tired, even more delectable." The Snake-man hissed with a low rumble. His mouth curled up into a fanged feral smile.

Morgan's legs screamed to run. It took all he could to stop his hands from trembling, let alone holding up his blade. The entirety of his being was screaming one word.

"Run."

Morgan listened, raising his blade and charging towards the Snake-Man, Clarent's black blade beginning to shine with a light of its own. It clashed with the jagged spear, sending out a resounding note that reverberated through his entire body. Morgan pushed harder and faster, slicing through the spear, through the snake, and then deep into the floor.

"Eat that," Morgan said, as he pulled Clarent out of his opponents' carcass. A grin spread across his face as he looked down at the eviscerated serpent. Then his lips puckered, and his cheeks bulged. He turned, doubled over, and vomited, glad no one was around to see him.

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