

Vaniiri

EVERY ACTION THIS FAMILY TAKES IS TO ENSURE THAT YOU, OUR BLOOD, AND OUR ENTIRE LINE, SECURES SAFETY, WEALTH, AND STANDING FOR YEARS TO COME."

Family Dinner

"I will have none of it," Gaston said quietly, his eyes narrowing behind the candlelight, the tips of his fingers becoming visible as steeples above the flickering shadow and light of the table. "This family quickly becoming the most successful distributor of medicine in all of the Bellaroux region, and my own son seeks to ram a dagger in my heart and forget his family!"

"Father..." Piero said, his voice trailing as he looked to his clearly upset mother, a handkerchief close to her eyes, "do not presume that I am betraying you simply because I have an opportunity at Libertino. Have you not seen what I can do with brush in hand? I can paint the Hills of Gethanar without ever setting eyes on them if description given reads true. I can paint the brown eyes of the girl I passed by at the stables whom I'll otherwise never see again. I can paint feeling with proper stroke of brush."

"And you think success at hobby gives you right to leave your own blood for six cycles? Talented? Yes, you show promise. But how few artists bring food and wealth to their family name? Most line the streets of Bellaroux, clamoring for attention and coin. Only the greats stand out and honor their family: Vivasso, Galentago, Biscini," Gaston said leaning forward, his words growing more serious. The steam rising from his dinner plate had dispersed. "You are not Vivasso, Galentago, or Biscini. You are Famiglia Rosa, and you have no time for Libertino."

"He could be as great as any of them," Delaina spoke at last, composing herself, "and you know it." Her watered eyes drifted across the table to Piero. "Son, you are talented, but your father is right. Our hands grow weary, and six years we may be frail. You are the last son of the Rosa line. You cannot abandon family for your passions."

Piero turned his head away, unsure of how to respond. His fork left his hand, and ceramic struck ceramic in a dull ding.

"Yes, he can be great," Gaston paused, "if he continues to raise the wealth and standing of our family rather than make a fool of his father. If he goes to Libertino, he is bending the name Rosa over the table and--"

“Gaston!” Delaina shrieked, interrupting him.

Piero stood, fumbling over his chair as he exited the dimly lit dining room. His mind was made up. He could not stand another minute of it. He had the heart of an artist, not an entrepreneur. Damn the name Rosa if all that it brought with it was the hope of a life where he'd only be measured against his own father and grandfather's successes.

“I know what you mean to do,” Gaston yelled, at last getting loud as he stood up from his chair. “You feed Famiglia Rosa to the lions whilst going to live with the lambs. If you leave this manor tonight, I name you Trahir and you forfeit my name.”

“Damn your name!” Piero yelled from the next room, his voice muffled by walls and distance.

“Gaston...” Delaina's eyes watered once again, “...no. He's our only son.”

Gaston refused her gaze, and stared incredulous at the dining room walkway.

Despite the nasty fight and the result, Piero had felt as if a weight had been lifted off his shoulders. The Corked Barrel was the last tavern in Bellaroux heading west, and the dark-haired dilettante decided to make it his last stop before hitting the stables in the morning and buying a horse. Libertino was a long way.

The human girl at the bar was cute. Probably just old enough to be out this late on her own.

“I'm an artist, you know,” Piero said as he approached, initiating just the briefest of contact with her hand. It worked every time.

Before long, they were walking down the street towards the fountain in the west commons. Lunia was vacant on this night, and so the trickling water was nigh invisible against the weathered stone. Piero wondered if the girls at Libertino would be as beautiful as this one as he sat down near the water's edge, his hand in hers. He hadn't even asked her name yet.

“What's your name?” Was what he meant to say as he opened his mouth, but all that came out was a heave, a gargle, and hot blood. The crossbow bolt hadn't made a sound as it entered the base of Piero's head. The girl, terrified, threw her hands in the air and screamed, running off into the night. Piero collapsed on himself, half his body falling into the fountain. Soon after, the nearly invisible water had a shimmer to it, the font gurgling as thick life bubbled through it and back onto its source.

On a nearby rooftop, another Vaniiri looked on, emotionless beneath his dark hood. He quietly returned his crossbow to its case, turning behind him to another hooded figure.

“Perform a sending ritual for Gaston. Tell him the Trahir is dead.”

Description:

Adaptable, goal-driven, and passionate, Vaniiri are a race bent on both setting an example for the rest of the world while controlling as much of it as they can from the shadows. They have a deep respect for family that transcends common maternal and fraternal bonds. All who share the blood of the legendary vampire ancestors can trace their lineage back to a scant handful of heroes that once ensured the survivability of the human race in the south of Aular. Because of this, Vaniiri have always been closely associated with humans; sometimes they are often seen as a simple offshoot of humanity.

The Vaniiri are not only known for adapting to the many ever-changing trends, customs, and styles of Aularia, but are often at the forefront of them. Many new ideas filter into Aularian culture as a result of Vaniiri minds. The Tech Ascendancy, nationwide democratic ideas, radical changes to the Church of En doctrine, racial equality, art movements, state-sponsored education, and world-changing actions such as the Sacred Grounds Pact have all sprung from Vaniiri minds. The Vaniiri homeland of Capriana is the starting point for all sorts of innovation in art, architecture, fashion, political systems, education, science, and even religion.

Vaniiri tend to focus on attaining status and wealth to better the social standings of themselves, their families, and their race. Parents and elders often instill a sense of purpose in their children, with many having very particular ideas about what their family should do to grow. This passion and drive impressed upon young Vaniiri has in fact led many to succeed in gaining these desired positions and bettering their race, while furthering negative stereotypes of themselves to those that see them a power hungry. At the same time, many a Vaniiri reach their end of their lives unhappy that they had done what their family expected of them, rather than what they truly wanted for themselves. This dichotomy is present in all of Vaniiri life: They preach progressivism while clinging to traditionalism, they preach freedom while enslaving themselves to expectations, they preach individualism while placing great value on familial success, and they preach the importance of the matron while so many fatherly elders hold tight grips over so many spheres of influence. Some would go as far as to call Vaniiri hypocrites, but the truth is really much deeper than that: A Vaniiri is all of these things, all at once.

In Capriana, Vaniiri flourish and prosper more than anywhere else in the world. It is only in Capriana where attitudes towards their race leave the Vaniiri completely unimpeded. While they have begun to be more socially accepted within the Gethanar Confederacy and Sholbara, the Daltanic Empire looks at Vaniiri as subhuman, and the Mag'Duar see them as a bit of an oddity. While the Caprian flag paints a picture of three races united, when one looks at the wealth and political power in the country, Vaniiri have the lion's share. In areas such as Ostlea and Daltanica, propaganda is spread about how the Vaniiri try to rise in to positions of power so they can take over and enforce the policies and practices as set by the Vaniiri Queen of Capriana, Luciana Delacroix. They also spread rumors that the Vaniiri are monstrous creatures; deceivers and hypocrites that preach progressivism and equality with all the other races, while actually looking down on them. After all, if other races were anything more than creatures for feasting on, why haven't the Vaniiri ever stepped aside and allowed a human or an orc a turn at ruling Capriana?

Ostlea is particularly wary of the Vaniiri, who do not look to Heiligstead as the center of the Church of En, following instead the guidance of the priests of Bellaroux.

The Vaniiri tend to follow the entire pantheon of the Church of En, but pay homage to the goddess Saravii in particular, in something that has been called the Caprian Rite. She has been raised to the status of the patron goddess of Capriana, as opposed to the more common Ostlean Rite, where Jaejal holds this position. This drastic change between the Northern and Southern churches was started by a group of Vaniiri known as the Pure. The Pure put great stock in their heritage, seeing a great and noble past of heroism that began at the close of the Dawn Wars. These Vaniiri see the powerful first Vampire--Aresh--and Saravii--goddess of blood and family-- as the pillars that hold up the Vaniiri race.

History:

Aresh's Awakening and the Dusk War

The stories say that the Vaniiri are descendants of the vampires of antiquity, ancient beings that walked the line between death and life. Their progenitor, Aresh, is revered as the father of all Vaniiri, a monster-turned-man that is nearer to a god than any other being to have walked on Aularian soil short of Saphael and Jaejal themselves. To many, the amount of legend and missing information that surrounds the story of Aresh have made him into a fairy tale to tell young Vaniiri children, while to others Aresh is revered as a very real being. The pure are the most devout believers of Aresh's existence, and most apt to bring up his name. Aresh is something of a secular savior; whether a Vaniiri reveres Saravii, the Two Worlds, or even the Tech Ascendancy, room is often made for his existence in any belief system.

Deep in Sholbara, a place known today as The Blood Cairn is the spot believed to be where Aresh came into existence, marked by its crimson sands and bloody stones. How Aresh came into existence is unclear, and adds fuel to his legend: was he some primal being from before the Incursion, something the Incursion created, a horror that worked against its own nature to become a savior, or a gift from Saravii herself? It is said when Aresh awakened on Aularia he was like a mindless beast that wandered from the Cairn in the fields of what would one day be Sholbara, down south to the open fields that would one day make up his own country, Capriana. The plains of Capriana were populated mostly with large bands of wandering tribes of humans along with some wild elf settlements in the forests. During this time, before the establishment of Capriana and the war between the Orcs, Aresh was wandering the plains at night and feeding upon any groups he came upon. The human tribes and wild elf settlements feared this creature finding its way near their villages, with stories spreading of villages and hunting parties that would be wiped out with few survivors spared from Aresh's hunger. As if this creature of the night wasn't a large enough threat, the savage orcs coming up from the southern shores in large war bands were laying waste to human and wild elf resistance. With their being no unification between wild elves and humans, and humans spread into disparate tribes that were generations away from their common roots in Aular City, the orcs were unstoppable.

With the south in complete turmoil, the few remaining tribes counted on hope and prayers to stay alive. Rumors began to spread of a powerful, persuasive man presenting himself to each surviving tribe. Join him, he said, and they could take back the south and leave a powerful legacy. He claimed that he had wandered the countryside in darkness for many years as the creature known as Aresh, before finally gaining cognizance of his purpose as dictated to him by the goddess Saravii. One by one, tribal leaders joined with him: Ahuva the Regal, Seth the Decisive, Aharon the Bastard, Avigail the Joyous, Septimus the Builder, Shira the Destroyer, Tamar the Ancient, Keila the Innocent, Magnus the Wise, Zahava the Brave, and Gidon the Unyielding. At last, he came upon the last and greatest tribe leader, Hados. Hados was proud, and at first refused Aresh's offer and challenged the stranger to combat. It didn't take long for Hados to see that his attempts were useless, as Aresh effortlessly dodged any attack he threw at him. Aresh, however, did not strike Hados. He knew what was in Hados' heart: for one to lead all of the remaining tribes, they must be stronger than the strongest of them all. When this was proven to Hados, he at last relented and agree to follow the monster-made-man.

Aresh's plan was to unify these twelve strong tribes and ally with the Wild Elves and few remaining human villages. Each of the tribe leaders would be his greatest warriors. Hados, he said, would be the greatest among them. Aresh cut his palm and allowed the blood to pool up and trickle down to his fingertips. On each of the tribe leaders he drew a mark in blood over their eyes. When the sun fell, the first twelve vampires came into being. Together, they met with the neighboring human and wild elf tribes and brought them together into a unified military force, 8,000 strong. The Dusk War had begun, a final war that would see the passing of the Age of Dawn.

The orcs were completely unprepared for this new resistance. While many humans and wild elves fell, whenever a vampire led them the victory was always decisive. Steadily, this army cut through the orc-held lands, limited only by their numbers. Before long, victory was clearly in sight. Aresh, growing ever wiser by the night, sought to offer the orcs a peace. Many of the vampire generals disagreed, but dared not act against their leader, save for one: Hados.

Hados, without Aresh's approval took a large force loyal to him and planned to ambush the largest remaining orc stronghold. Hados, full of vengeance and excitement that he would soon eradicate the orcs, tapped deep into the powers of blood that Aresh had granted him. He bled into the ground and commanded that it raise itself, creating the Fingers of Hados in an earthquake that shattered the orc camp. Hados' troops took advantage of the chaos and began wiping out every orc man, woman, and child.

Aresh arrived as Hados and his men were executing the prisoners captured during the ambush. Aresh immediately had Hados detained and gazed upon the unnecessary carnage he and his men had caused. He looked upon the few surviving orcs; less than a hundred survivors of an entire race. He declared that there would be no more bloodshed, sparing the life of the remaining orcs. He told the surviving orcs that they would keep their lives, but would be indentured servants to he and his people for the next 50 years. They would repay the debt of their destruction by building the new nation that Aresh had envisioned, brick-by-brick. Aresh divided his land into Rouen and Savona,

with the two together forming the nation of Capriana, of which he would have a direct hand in ruling. He took Ahuva as his wife, while commanding the remaining vampire generals to each create a single vampire on their own and take them as their lover.

The Council

While Aresh was disappointed by Hados' decision, he still honored him as a great general and did not seek to erase his contribution to the war. Capriana began near where Hados had won his final victory, and would be where Aresh would have his capital. The city was called Bellaroux, and humans, orcs, and vampires all worked to create its long-standing splendor. Most of the wild elves that had aided in the effort returned to the wilderness, to the dancing island to the east, or to the deserts to the north. Those that remained soon found themselves under the rules of Aresh, while the twelve original vampires became his advisory council.

The Council worked with Aresh to plan out the layout of the city, manage the population, create jobs, manage defense, and ensure that Capriana would become what they had envisioned it would be. Each member of the council took ownership over a different aspect of Caprian society, sometimes going as far as bending something as simple as fashion trends to their liking. Control was the name of the game; freedom was an illusion. Some of the vampires wanted to create more of their kind, but Aresh had only granted each of them the power to do so once; Aresh knew that spreading out Saravii's gift would only do more harm than good.

Around this time, one of Aresh and Ahuva's children, Argent Morrow, and his human wife Lilah gave birth to a child bearing a blood mark on her face similar to the one her father possessed. Aresh saw this child, Liora Morrow, and at last saw the potential for his people that he had promised the tribesmen many years earlier. In the centuries that followed, generations of this new race, called the Vaniiri, came into the fold. Satisfied with his accomplishments, Aresh announced that he would be stepping down from being the leader of Capriana; the next generation would need to take charge and lead the people to a brighter future with less connection to the violent past. From his flock, Aresh selected Nikola Delacroix, his direct offspring, to be the first king of Capriana. Aresh briefly advised the new King, before at last disappearing from public record. Delacroix and the council worked together to rule the country.

As the years progressed, the council noticed that each generation of Vaniiri was less Vampire-like than the last. The Council theorized that the diluting of the blood from Vaniiri having children with non-Vaniiri would result in a child with less power. Some of the members of the council, upon learning of this, wanted to promote Vaniiri to stop mating with non-Vaniiri to keep the bloodline pure. Others felt that it was far more important that the old values of progress, family, and ambition spread than a pureness of blood. The state took no official stance on Vaniiri breeding, and so once again members of the council took to the shadows to pursue their agendas. As the power struggle continued, King Nikola abdicated in favor of his daughter Lucy becoming Queen, beginning a matrilineal primogeniture that would honor the bloodmother, Saravii. Capriana

flourished in happiness, with the beloved Queen Lucy becoming a much more relatable leader than an ancient vampire lord ever could have been. Queen Lucy also refused to bend to the will of the council, and power began to shift into her court. The council's public face began to fade and many believed the Vampires had followed Aresh's lead and gone somewhere to rest. Still, signs of the Vampires continued throughout Caprian history, becoming the stuff of rumor and legend.

Families Flourish

With each generation that followed, Vaniiri took a larger role in world events, particularly in regard to Capriana. The small human nation of Tanta negotiated with, and eventually joined as a third territory in Capriana thanks to Vaniiri diplomats. In other parts of the world, Vaniiri were not looked upon with the kindest of eyes. Vaniiri developed a reputation for ambition and always finding a way to get what they wanted. As ambassadors, they were intimidating. In commerce, they were dominant. In Capriana, the Delacroix family remained in power. During this time the Vaniiri and people of Capriana were experiencing a golden age.

Vaniiri populations began to creep into the majority in Capriana, marking a serious challenge to human dominance throughout the region and even the world. Racial tensions began to rise, and Vaniiri vilification, both from within Capriana and without, was on the rise. Compounding this mindset was a plague, known as the Red Terror. Few priests were able to treat the sickness, which would cause extreme fever, dehydration, boils, and a death marked by blood rising through the pores of the skin. Magics of all kinds had little to no effect, and the result always seemed the same. Like an unyielding tide, the plague spread quickly across the south. Orcs and humans died by the scores, but curiously, the Vaniiri remained unaffected.

Rumors began to spread of a Vaniiri conspiracy to alter the population, or that perhaps the work of the shadowy vampire council of old was at play. Mistrust was the word of the day, with powerful human families, such as the Savarrios, leading the charge against the Vaniiri status quo. These rumors caused massive disorder amongst the people of Capriana. The people were terrified of the conspiracy. Riots, looting, and arson spread across the cities and towns of Capriana in a near-revolution. Vaniiri citizens, in fear for their lives, left Capriana in waves on ships or through the desert, forcing themselves to adapt to lifestyles that were far from the utopian homeland that they fondly remembered their forefathers writing about. With the riots getting worse; the people felt civil war was nearly upon them.

At last, in a small town of in the southwest, a cure was developed. The cure used non-magical means to cleanse the Red Terror. As the treatment spread and saved the lives of those afflicted, the Delacroix family made a political move to marry their son, Valorin, to the Eldest Daughter of House Savarrio. Combined, these actions began to quench the civil unrest in Capriana, but not before many Vaniiri lost their lives. Even with the plague, the witch-hunt that was the anti-Vaniiri movement led to humans recapturing, and forever retaking the status of majority population in Capriana. With Delacroix's political move, the eldest daughter of House Savarrio, Lady Aleana

Savarrio, eventually became the first human queen of Capriana after the previous Queen failed to ever produce a daughter. This great rise in House Savarrio's power resulted in massive internal reforms that installed humans into positions that were previously only ever occupied by Vaniiri.

A wave of defeat spread across the Vaniiri race as a whole, only leading them to turn inward and strengthen their familial bonds. While publicly the Vaniiri were down and out, behind closed doors they consolidated their power, doing what their race did best: exerting influence, amassing unobvious sources of power, and putting their fingers in every pie. But soon enough, Capriana faced another trial. Sea Dwarves began lining the outlying harbors of Capriana, not allowing ships through. The Sea Dwarves were a bit of a mystery; they invaded only the shores, but did so with a power that Capriana was incapable of refuting. During this time Capriana was cut off from most of the world and had to focus on becoming self-sufficient and reliant. Their naval capacity was crippled, and they had to rely on land travel and the Tanta River more and more.

As a result, Capriana, much like the Vaniiri themselves, looked inward and became the central hub of unique innovation, technological advances, art, and more. The goods and fashions of Capriana were desired all across Aular. With the Jorhaul blockading the shores, Capriana goods only seemed more and more desirable to foreigners as a luxury. Companies would pay a fortune to buy Caprian goods whenever they passed through the desert. During this time of isolation, another new group became increasingly more prevalent: The Pure. The Pure seemed a result of long-held plans to keep Vaniiri blood as strong as possible. They truly believed in the stories of the founding of Capriana by the first vampire, Aresh. By now, in the Age of Salt, the story had become legend. This group's beliefs spread quickly, especially when the King, Valorin Delacroix, accepted the ways of the Pure and was being instructed in them, much to the chagrin of his wife. The king accepted these beliefs so much that he made a deal with the Bara'kaa to have special rights to the lands south of Sundirra, The Blood Cairn. Those in Capriana that followed the church of En began to focus their worship on Saravii, raising her to the status of figurehead deity of the Church of En instead of Jaejal. Without fail, children began to inherit the blood mark of their mother, and never their father.

Fear of Tainted Blood

One of the darkest moments of Vaniiri and Caprian history was the event known as the Red Sin. After peace had returned to Capriana, civil war avoided, King Valorin and Queen Aleana gave birth to their first son, Zellini Delacroix. Like his father, Zellini believed in and followed the practices of the Pure. Zellini was a natural, praised by all his instructors for his mastery of their ways of blood sorcery. Zellini began teaching the ways of the Pure to his two younger brothers and sisters. Zellini, seen as a prodigy, was proposed as the successor to the throne in lieu of his younger sister. To both subvert Savarrio's power and bring the Vaniiri back into complete control of the crown, Valorin used Zellini's popularity and announced that he and his wife would abdicate the throne and hand it over to their son when he turned twenty years old.

Before his ascension to the throne, Zellini wanted to make a pilgrimage to the Blood Cairn, the

holy ground of the Pure. Zellini, on his way returning from the Blood Cairn to the Capital of Bellaroux asked for several female companions to be brought to his carriage. Upon arriving home, he left the carriage with no escorts. Zellini went to take the throne and called for the head priest from the Red Cathedral to come and begin his coronation ceremony immediately. The Delacroix family, the nobles who resided in Bellaroux, the head priest, and some of the higher ranking members of the clergy were in participation. During this ceremony, a royal guard inspected the empty carriage the prince had been riding in, as there was blood leaking from the side of it. The inside of the carriage was painted in blood and body parts of the women that had rode with the prince. The guard rushed to the throne room, knowing this could only mean that the prince was a feaster--a Vaniiri that has lost itself to its predatory senses--and his family must be informed. The royal guard came in too late, just as the high priest placed the crown on Zellini's head, declaring him king.

At this moment, Zellini ripped out the heart of the head priest of Saravii and began casting devastating blood spells upon the nearby crowd. Zellini demanded the guards, whom had sworn oaths to the crown, attack the crowd. Zellini turned to his family, cut down his father and mother, and began feeding on his brothers and sisters in front of the surviving members of the noble court. Suddenly, all Vaniiri across the world recorded a similar experience to one another: they felt their blood rushing faster and faster, feeling empowered as they had never had before. As this happened, all of the royal guards slaughtering the people in the throne room were decapitated. As those few still living looked toward the throne, they saw Zellini being held by his throat. The figure that held him was towering, encapsulated in finely crafted armor of red and black, eyes glowing red with rage. Zellini struggled in protest, but the figure squeezed tight around his neck. "I am Aresh," the figure said to Zellini, "and your depravity embarrasses my family." With that, Zellini was no more; his skin glowed as ember, before falling apart to nothing but ash. And so, Aresh had apparently returned, though many who stood beside him and gazed upon him with their own eyes did not believe it.

Once again, Aresh installed himself as ruler. The Unifier had returned, wishing to see his nation return to its former glory. Despite the vampire hero's return to power, the Vaniiri lost significant power in Capriana. Feasters had been rumored, but Zellini's Red Sin had brought the affliction to light as fact. Distrust for the Vaniiri was at an all-time high. Following the formation of the Kingdom of Daltanica, House Savarrio took the opportunity and at last fled Capriana in fear of the subversive threat of the Vaniiri. The man that claimed himself to be Aresh once again put one of his daughters on the throne. Aresh would be said to appear one more time in history; this time not to rule, but to play diplomat and broker an open trade deal with Sholbara before heading to rest once again.

Vaniiri in the Modern Day

With the discovery and settlement of Casoria, many of the Vaniiri flocked there from Capriana. They saw how the humans were gaining power again in Capriana, with the advent of more democratic ideals that slowly sapped power from the Vaniiri-held crown. In Casoria, Vaniiri held all the positions of power like they once did when the Vaniiri took power in Capriana. In Casoria importance was again focused on standing and position. Sadly in this closed society of drugs, decadence, and the old wealth from Capriana, the Vaniiri have tapped into the worst parts of their nature. This slowly caused Casoria to become a shadow of Capriana's greatness. The Vaniiri here have corrupted themselves and live on this island, fighting with one another, trying to hold the highest positions of power. Vaniiri who have gone elsewhere in the world tend to do quite well for themselves, working their way into key parts of government, businesses, and the church in most places in Aularia, save for the Daltanic Empire. The recent discovery of Lucania has caused plenty of excitement amongst the Vaniiri many seek some way of passage to the new lands to try and rise to positions of power in the new world. Capriana has become the "old world", and newer generations of Vaniiri are far more open to a much larger world than their forefathers ever were.

Important Figures:

Aresh

Aresh is the legendary founder and hero of Capriana. It is said that he is Saravii's chosen, and was made into the first vampire. There is much unknown about Aresh, especially things related to his creation and why he spent years roaming around the desert and plains of Capriana as a blood-thirsty monster. He came to the tribesmen of the lands that would one day become Capriana in their greatest time of need. They were currently being pushed up north by invading savage orcs that were killing and pillaging anyone who stood before them. It was then that he appeared before leaders and great warriors of the human and wild elf tribes saying that if they follow him, he would grant them the power needed to defeat their enemies. Aresh granted twelve strong warriors and leaders from the various tribes with the power of vampirism. The unified tribes led by Aresh won the war against the orcs. The people called for Aresh to continue leading them as their King, and he did. He built up the capital city of Bellaroux, and once it was established, he left the crown for one of his children to take over. He has returned since then to dispatch Zellini after the Red Sin Massacre. He took the throne for twenty years afterwards before installing a new line of Delacroixs. It is said that whenever Aresh awakens, all Vaniiri and Vampires in the world can feel it. His main motivation seems to be the continuing of progress of Capriana, and is something of a national hero. Legends claims he will appear whenever Capriana is in great need of him.

Hadios the Great

Hadios is the greatest of the Vampires made by Aresh. He was once a great warrior respected

and feared by members of other tribes that had done battle with him. He is known for his great power as a vampire that is unparalleled by any of the other eleven vampires created by Aresh. He is also known for his savagery during the Dusk War. It was Hados who openly refused Aresh's orders to spare the surviving orcs on the east coast and led an elite troop of tribesmen to wipe out the last and largest encampment of Orcs that were located where the Capital City of Bellaroux is today. Hados used his tremendous powers to cause massive upheavals under the orc encampment forming what now are referred to as The Fingers of Hados. There are many rumors of what Hados is doing in the shadows, as the council all but disappeared from the public eye shortly after Aresh's descendant took control of the throne. What people do know is that despite his defiance of Aresh, he does deeply respect him and that he would do anything to provide safety for the people of Capriana. Despite his defiance, Hados is still hailed as the hero that brought an end to the Dusk War.

Queen Delacroix

The Current Queen of Capriana, she possesses the blood of Aresh and Wild Elf heritage, noticeable by her pointed ears. Queen Delacroix is of Aresh's new line after Zellini was disposed of after the Red Sin massacre. She is loved by all the people of Capriana. She is by no means a dictator; she has imposed many ordinances that have placed a lot of power into the hands of the people, giving them the right to elect representatives to deliver their concerns to the Queen, advocating civil rights, and putting her own feelings aside to enact the will of the populace. She is very open-minded and encourages the people to be the same. She has been an advocate for true freedom of ideas and religion, turning Capriana into a haven for counter-cultural religions such as the Tech Ascendancy. The Queen is a devout follower of Saravii of the Church of En and also follows the ways of the Pure. Her support of people's civil rights has caused her to be the largest enemy of the Daltanic Empire, whom view her ideas as dangerous. The Queen is frequently at risk from her many violent enemies that lurk in the shadows who would prefer the old ways. The Queen is very optimistic about the discovery of Lucania and the Sacred Grounds Pact hoping it will act as a melting pot that will help solidify this temporary peace it has created.

Marca De Felice

Not all Vaniiri are born into wealth and status. Although most Vaniiri strive for these things, it is not unheard of for those that grew up in the sewer to make it to the top. Marca de Felice is a great example of a Vaniiri who grew up with nothing and accomplished great tasks that will forever mark him in the history books. Marca was raised in an orphanage in Port Lisim, always looking out at the water, dreaming that something bigger and better awaited him out there. When he was old enough to leave the orphanage, he headed straight for the docks and began working on a fishing boat, saving all he could until he could buy a small trading boat of his own. He achieved this goal and began a small trading company, that exists to this day, The Felician Trading Company. He started off buying goods from the north and bringing them down south. As his name became more well-known, so did his wealth. He bought bigger ships and began going as far north as Ostlea. The merchant became so successful that he owned a small armada of trading vessels, convincing the Caprian crown to make a contract with the company to be in charge of trade dealings with

their settlement across the Olive Sea and Casoria. Marca was allowed to have his ships sail waving the Capriana Banner; a high honor giving his ships protection guaranteed by the Crown. Upon their first voyage to Casoria, one which Marca insisted he lead himself, a large storm blew them off course they anchored to the nearest island. The storm subsided and when Marca tried to figure out which island they were on, he soon realized that this was a new island that had appeared in the fog just like the others. He took the Caprian Banner from the ship planted it along the shore and claimed the new island for Capriana and the Queen. It wasn't long before the island was named Lucania and the settlement of Marca's Refuge was established.

Important Locations:

The Blood Cairn

Located in Sholbara, this is a pile of red rocks that is said to mark where Aresh awakened. The entire area is dry and far from the green line. Tents spread out for miles around it by Vaniiri Pure that have made a pilgrimage here, believing that the place holds special power. While many Pure and blood priests make the trek into the desert to view the Cairn, only the most strong-willed settle here, all in the hope that they will see some sign of Aresh reawakening.

The Red Cathedral

The center for the Church of En in the south, located in the groves of Roeun. This is the center of worship in Capriana. Saravii is held as the matriarchal deity here instead of Jaejal in the North, leading to tension with the more mainstream views in the north. The Red Cathedral has gone without a High Priest since the days of Zellini, with the Church feeling no one should take up the mantle without an irrefutable divine sign that they should. While some have attempted to politically maneuver themselves into the position, the clergy have been implacable on this matter. As each year passes without a true leader in the Red Cathedral, it continues to lose influence to the Bleeding Eye Cathedral.

The Bleeding Eye Cathedral

A small cathedral once devoted to the Church of En, at some point in recent history the Priestesses there became radicalized, forsaking all deities except for Saravii and claiming that she was the only true goddess of Aularia. This gave birth to an offshoot religion called the "Bleeding Eye Cult," which has grown in popularity throughout Capriana at much the same rate of other religions such as the Tech Ascendancy.

Role-Playing a Vaniiri:

Overview

Vaniiri are a blend of old and new, with one foot in the old world and one foot in the future. Some Vaniiri are very open about this worldview, while others keep the old ways behind closed doors, making their public selves much more agreeable and progressive. Many other races do not fully place their trust in Vaniiri because of their well-known tendency to always have a hidden agenda, and their stereotypical lust for advancement in all aspects that interest them. Vaniiri are purveyors of culture, acceptance, and knowledge. They strive for self-improvement, and thus improvement of their race as a whole.

Outside of their families, Vaniiri can be fiercely independent people that are self-reliant. They strike out on their own to dominate a particular area of influence, bringing that influence back to their own family for mutual gain.

Vaniiri are predators and saviors. Progressive and traditional. Cultured and ethnocentric. Honest and illusive. Dominant and prepared. Contrarian and hypocritical.

Control and Influence

Vaniiri, without fail, attempt to exert control or influence over whatever particular spheres they are interested in. Whether this means that the Vaniiri takes a role of leadership, is the power behind the throne, are quick to slap down a bribe when they want things to go their way, or have a much more subtle and indirect approach, Vaniiri cannot seem to help themselves. They cannot settle for being a cog in the machine; they always--whether consciously or subconsciously--want to be the one turning the handle or pulling the lever.

Family

Vaniiri that are separated from their blood famiglia tend to form family-like structures with other separated Vaniiri. A Vaniiri family takes on a name and meets regularly for family dinners; exquisite, multi-course meals of which there is almost always one blood-related course. The family dinner tends to begin as a formal affair that loses much of its formality over time, or only re-establishes it when new members are added. Families tend to have a Matriarch (more often) or a Patriarch that guides the family's goals, as well as an Elder or Advisor that settles disputes between family members. Families keep one another's secrets. While they may not directly support one another's individual pursuits, they usually attempt to divide up areas of influence so as to not interfere with one another; the goal being to give as much power back to the family as possible.

While families are loyal to one another, they also have a strange internal sense of justice and rules, often dictated by the family's makeup. Punishment is not delivered out of spite, but to teach a lesson. Sometimes, family members act against one another in political or financial arenas and are found out, and things are handled and everyone moves on. It is very rare for a Vaniiri family to have violent intentions towards one another that aren't a result of a punishment. Families are also relentless in opposing their enemies. Members will often commit absurd resources to taking down

an enemy of the family. Trusted blood dolls sometimes get to share in family activities as well, depending on the family's trust of that particular blood doll, but the second family affairs begin the blood doll is seen as a lesser being, no matter their status outside of family affairs.

Feeding

There are several viewpoints on feeding in the modern day. In Casoria, feeding is like it was in the old days; Vaniiri there tend to bite anyone off the street that they think they can manage to if they so wish. This type of feeding is an exhibition of control in a larger sense, and harkens back to the early days of Capriana when Vaniiri were the true dominant race. Others apply specific morals to feeding beyond "taking what you can get". Some Vaniiri avoid feeding whatsoever. They view it as the worst part of their baser instincts and will not do so, short of perhaps a life-threatening moment. While this viewpoint is rare, it is also gaining traction, especially in the city centers of Casoria. Other Vaniiri view feeding the same way a human views eating. Feeding is something to be done when needed. When a Vaniiri is weak, a willing participant can provide them with sustenance to heal their wounds or restore their mana. This is perhaps the most popular viewpoint of feeding.

Finally, some Vaniiri view feeding as an act of intimacy. This is an old world viewpoint that comes from the days when Vaniiri had to be careful about spreading the Red Terror. Whether this intimacy is platonic or romantic depends on the relationship the Vaniiri has with whom they are feeding on, but these Vaniiri are the ones most likely to have blood dolls or selective feeding habits. These Vaniiri may not always feed simply because they need sustenance, but may do so just because. There are also two very contrasting viewpoints on Vaniiri feeding on other Vaniiri, with few falling in between. Some Vaniiri view feeding on one another as perfectly acceptable, while others are completely against it. A third viewpoint seems ok with it in moderation, so long as one doesn't become a Pazzo. Still, the taste for Vaniiri blood is difficult to kick once it is acquired. Vaniiri viewpoints on feeding may also just be a combination of multiple standard views.

Opinions of Other Races:

Humans: They make up the majority of the population of the world so best to try and work together with them if we are to gain power for ourselves. In some regards, we are not all that different from humans.

Grobs: Worthless flesh bags. Anything a grob can do, an orc can do better and will be more civilized about it.

Wild Elves: They seem to be almost as plentiful as humans though they like to keep to the woods. They are good allies when outside of the cities, but not going to help us move up in wealth or status.

City Elves: We have no problems with these people as many others seem to do. They make good

converts to Saravii.

Orcs: Enemies of the past, but have aided us in building our country up to the ground from nothing. They will always be welcome to sit at our table, but we must keep an eye on them. They have grown into a formidable economic force, and some have unseated kin from power.

Seraphim: As we look to Saravii, they look to Saphael. It is rare that we can strike an accord in personal matters, though they can be strong political allies, especially when it pertains to the church.

Bara'kaa: They are odd fellows, unlike most anything else in the world. Still, they are peaceful and open to trade. We have high regard for them. Their lands are where Aresh was born.

Fae: These fascinating creatures are very unique and interesting, albeit flighty. They know the greatest of joy and the worst of darkness.

Sideshow: They taste like death.

Totemic: Unusual, wild, and savage. Even the civilized ones.

Mag'Duar: Earthy; pleasant aftertaste.

Jorhaul: Salty; bitter aftertaste.

Common Dwarves: Practically human.

Lexicon:

Famiglia: Sometimes used to describe the family that a Vaniiri is from, coming from an old Caprian term.

Elder: A Vaniiri that is relatively experienced compared to the other Vaniiri around them.

Wildblood: A Vaniiri that has enough wild elf lineage that they actually have elf-like ears.

Feaster: A derogatory term used to describe someone that can't control their appetite for feeding, coming from the legend that some Vaniiri children are born with only base instincts and a taste for flesh.

Pazzo: A Vaniiri that is addicted to Vaniiri blood.

Trahir: A Vaniiri that has given up claim to their family's position, standing, or wealth via betrayal or other actions. Essentially, someone that has been disinherited.



Blood Doll: A person that a Vaniiri feeds on and is favored by them. Usually, other Vaniiri that respect this Vaniiri will not feed on one another's blood dolls without permission.

Pop-Culture / Inspirations: The Originals and Underworld are good representations of how the family system works. Also True Blood, What We Do in the Shadows, and Interview with a Vampire are helpful representations that could also be used in determining how to represent a Vaniiri.