



Bard Handbook

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As The Bard in the world of Varial, it is up to you to help the players tell the story. The Bard can get involved in a number of ways. You have the option to create a character that can join the party and be part of the action. You also have the option to simply guide your players along in the campaign.

To run a campaign of Varial, you need a few simple tools. You will need two 20 sided dice and two six sided dice. If you are running the campaign offline, a pencil and printed character sheet is recommended. If you are running the campaign online, a character sheet that can be edited is recommended. Using a notepad type of application is perfectly fine.

You will also need a heavy dose of your own creativity. Varial gives you simple tools to work with, but the world itself is open to your imagination. Creating characters, campaigns and stories is mostly up to you and your players. We encourage creativity and we want you to create your own stories in the world given to you.

Character Creation



Basic Character Creation

In order to create a character, the player needs to first familiarize themselves with the Varial RPG. Once they have read through the rules, a character can be created.

The first thing a player must do is choose the race and class combination they would like to play. There are no restrictions on race/class combinations. What about Knights and Sentinels? We did say "get creative", didn't we? It isn't recommended you put restrictions on character creation unless you have decided to create a campaign that is limited to certain races or classes for the purpose of the story.

Once the race and class combination is decided, they may need to add some extra onto the sheet. If the player is a Naturalist, they need to choose their familiar. If the player is a Necromancer, they need to choose and name their pet. If the player is a Frenzy, they must choose their weapon.

Creating a character sheet for Varial is very simple. You must list the name of the character, their race and their class. If the character is a Frenzy, Naturalist or Necromancer, they must list their familiar, pet or chosen weapon. Then, the characters starting health pool must be listed. The health pool will change as time

goes on. There should be a space for items and gear to be listed as well as notes on the bonuses or abilities each one has.

Determining Starting Health Pool

Then, the health pool of the character is decided. A character's health pool is the total sum of their base health plus the items and gear they are carrying. All characters begin with base health and base items.

Some classes have the option to use more than one type of armor or weapon. Upon character creation, the player may choose which base weapon or armor they will use.

For example : A player who creates a Knight will have a base health pool of 55. They have the choice of Single-handed sword, Shields or Single-handed axes as a weapon. The Knight chooses a Single-handed sword and a Shield as their base weapons. This brings their Health Pool to 63 ($55+2+6=63$). The Knight must also choose their base armor. The player has chosen chain maille instead of plate. Chain maille is +7 to health, which brings their Health Pool up to 70 ($63+7=70$). This Knight's starting Health Pool is 70.

As the campaign continues, a character will receive items and gear that may add to their health pool. The character sheet simply needs to be updated with the item or gear they are carrying and the Health Pool adjusted accordingly.

Naturalists, Frenzys and Necromancers

Each of these classes have a bit extra to their character. A Naturalist must choose a familiar, a Frenzy must choose a weapon and a Necromancer must choose a pet.

The Naturalist's familiar can be with them as a pet through the campaign. It isn't recommended that the pet is given their own health pool, but they can be used in combat and share the *same* health pool as the Naturalist. This works because a Naturalist's bond with their familiar is so deep that they share emotions and sometimes even wounds. If a Naturalist's familiar is also their companion, the death of a companion can cause the Naturalist to mourn for months, become ill themselves and in some cases -- they can share death. A Naturalist can also

shapeshift into the familiar for a short time. This is part of the deep bond they share with the familiar and is also a class ability.

A Frenzy is trained in the Centaur fighting style. Because of this, they have been trained from a very young age with a specific weapon. As we all know, Gunnar prefers his large axe over all others. Every Frenzy has the choice of a base weapon at character creation. That weapon is now the one the type of weapon they will use throughout the entire campaign. If they do not have that weapon, they suffer a penalty. It isn't recommended that the Bard take the weapon away from the Frenzy or cause them to have a handicap by being forced to choose another weapon. If you have a Frenzy in your party, you must make certain the new weapons they receive are always their chosen weapon. However, if it is a temporary issue for the Frenzy to overcome or part of the story, you may choose to do it.

The Necromancer begins with a pet of their own. Unlike the Naturalist, the Necromancer has reanimated this pet, uses them and then discards them. The Necromancer's pet can be any person or animal in Varial. There are no restrictions since the pet has a base health pool. When the Necromancer's pet dies, the Necromancer is able to reanimate another pet with the same base health pool. How the Necromancer does this and when is up to the Bard. A Necromancer's pet should *not* have their own items or gear. However, you can give a Necromancer's pet items and gear if you'd like. If the pet dies, it is up to the Bard whether or not the Necromancer inherits these items.

Combat for The Bard



The Varial RPG Book has detailed information on how combat works in Varial. It is a simple system meant to allow you and your players to be creative with it. As The Bard, it is up to you to create engaging combat encounters for your players during the campaign. You must also be prepared for your players to attack something that you did not plan for. Things like...a tree or a gazebo. (We all know the joke)

As the Bard, the actions of the opponent is in your hand. An opponent is simply the enemy the players are fighting. In some cases, this is multiple enemies at once.

To easily determine the health pools of opponents, there is a simple formula a Bard can use. This is not the *only* way to do it, but an easy way to come up with a quick health pool for an opponent. If the players are fighting a powerful opponent, the opponent could have twice the health of the highest party member's health pool. For example, if the Frenzy in the party has a health pool of 80, the powerful opponent will have a health pool of 160.

For less powerful opponents, giving them 1.5x the health pool of the highest health party member is a good option. For example, if a Sentinel has a health pool of 76, then the opponent will have a health pool of 114. (76 in half is 38. $76 + 38 = 114$)

For multiple opponents, giving them equal health pools to party members is a good idea. For example, if the party is fighting four angry hermit crabs, each hermit crab will have a health pool of 42 since a member of the party has a health pool of 42.

Combat with multiple opponents

There are times where a party will fight more than one opponent at a time. As the Bard, you are the one to control each opponent and roll the dice for them. In the sourcebook, combat turns are fairly easy to understand. However, turns involving multiple opponents are not covered.

To make it simple, a turn with multiple opponents is treated as if two parties are fighting. The opponents will attack one at a time, targeting the party member you specify and roll the dice for each attack. The party will roll to defend against the attacks. Then, the party will attack and each member of the party will specify which opponent they are attacking. You will then roll to defend and roll the dice once for each opponent in combat. The turn is over and a new turn begins.

Keeping track of health pools during combat

Making sure health pools are kept track of during combat can be very simple. If you are playing tabletop, glancing at the party members character sheets is all you should need to do. If you are playing online, having a notepad application with the health pool of each party member is a good idea.

When a turn is over and a party member takes damage, the party member needs to note how much of their health pool is gone. This is why a pencil is required for tabletop play. Health pools can go up and down quickly during and after combat.

Example Combat

Here is an example of a full turn of combat in Varial.

Your party of a Risk, Frenzy, Physician and Necromancer encounter a rogue Technomancer who is blocking their entrance to a home in Queross. The Technomancer will listen to no persuasion and she attacks. She targets the Risk with a fireball channel through her device.

Combat has now begun. You have already decided this Technomancer is a non-powerful opponent. You see that the Frenzy has a health pool of 68. So the Technomancer opponent has been given a health pool of 102. You take your d20 and hand a player a d20. You roll first and roll a 17. The player rolls their d20 and rolls a 7. You (as the opponent) will attack first.

Since the Technomancer already channeled an attack targeting the Risk, you will now roll for that attack. This is the first turn of combat. You roll an 8 for your attack. The Risk declares that she will try to dive out of the way before the fireball hits her. She is now able to roll the dice to defend. She rolls a 17. She has successfully dove out of the way and the Risk takes no damage.

It is now turn 2 and the party may attack the opponent. The Frenzy with a health pool of 68 goes first. He declares he is using the Centaur Tactics ability and then declares he swipes at the Technomancer with his greatsword. The Frenzy rolls a 15 and adds 1 to the roll due to his ability. Your Technomancer opponent must defend against a 16 total. You roll to defend and roll a 7. The Technomancer opponent now takes 16 total damage and their health pool is now 86.

It is now the Risks turn to attack the opponent. The Risk is angered at a fellow Technomancer targeting her first and declares she will use life or death. The Risk rolls her d6 for the ability and rolls a 1. The answer is "die" and the Technomancer opponent will now take 1 extra damage this turn from the Risk. The Risk then declares their actual attack, answering the Technomancer with a magical fireball of their own. The Risk rolls the dice for their attack and rolls an 11. The Technomancer opponent now must defend and rolls a 19. The Risk does not land the fireball. However, their ability allowed them to do 1 point of damage. The Technomancer opponent takes 1 damage and their health pool is now 85.

The Necromancer goes next, sending in their reanimated cat to claw out the eyes of the Technomancer opponent! The Necromancer rolls the dice and rolls a 10. The Technomancer opponent rolls to defend and rolls a 5. The reanimated cat hisses and jumps on the Technomancer's face, clawing at her eyes! The Technomancer opponent has taken 10 points of damage and now has a health pool of 75.

It is now the turn of the Physician who happens to have a lovely item that was given to them earlier in Espachor. A small but volatile potion. The Physician declares they are throwing the potion bottle at the Technomancer before their

attack. This item you created has an ability attached to it where it does +(d6) damage when used. The Physician rolls a d6 for the item ability and rolls a 2. The item is now destroyed and can no longer be used. The Physician then uses the distraction of the small flame to bonk the Technomancer opponent on the head with their Physician's staff. The Physician rolls their dice and rolls a 13. The Technomancer opponent rolls to defend and rolls a 14. The Technomancer opponent sees the staff coming towards her and catches it before it hits. Still, she took 2 points of damage from the item ability. The opponent now has a health pool of 73.

This turn is now over and the Technomancer opponent can attack another party member, keep her sights on the Risk or use an attack that harms the entire party at once. To use an attack that harms the entire party at once, you still roll the dice once. Each party member must defend against the dice roll.

The Races of Varial



As the Bard, you know the history of Varial and the lore quite well. As a person, you probably have no idea. Here is a quick overview of the races of Varial and their history. You may also listen to the Varial Audio Books to get a feel for the world you are playing in.

Elves

The Elves came first in Varial. How they got there and how they became part of Varial no one knows. The scholars of Varial have books dating back many, many millennia and the oldest ones speak of the Elves only. There are two theories about the Elves. One is that the Elves were created with the world itself. Others say that the Elves came from another world and stepped through a portal into Varial.

Varial's magic was unlocked by the Elves and Ordrya was the first land to be settled thanks to them. When the Elves decided to cross the sea, they found the land of Athary and the Everpond. Unlike other races, the Elves consider Varial their homeworld. There is no other world that the Elves of Varial know of. Yes, they have seen other worlds with Elves. Some like them, some not. But, the Elves of Varial are the only race that seems to have always been there.

Because they are the most ancient race in Varial, the magic of the world is very attuned to the Elves. Every Elf is born with a magical talent of some sort. Many Elves go on to be Mages, Physicians, Knights or Sentinels. It's rare to see an Elf practice the ancient Centaur Fighting style or learn the art of the bow and/or firearms. Magic is so deep inside of the Elves that many Scholars say they can not be separated from it.

Average age of adulthood for Elves: 17

Average life expectancy for Elves: 400 - 500 years

Average height for Elves: Males - 6'6", Females - 6'3"

Elven hair colors: Blond, black, brown, white, silver, light blue, red

Elven eye colors: Gold, silver, blue, green. Elves have jewel toned eye colors.

Faerie

What we know of the Faerie dates back to twelve thousand sun turns ago. The first Faeries in Varial came from their homeworld of Aura (which is now the namesake of Athary's capital.) At the beginning, they were curious visitors who wanted to know more about Varial's magic. More and more Faerie began to visit Varial and the Elves readily accepted them despite their tendencies to become very violent when crossed.

A few Faerie decided to remain on the world and not return to their homeworld. At the beginning, they had settled in Ordrya along with the Elves. After the Elven explorers relayed the discovery of Athary, some of the Faeries went to see this land full of magic. It was then that the Faerie developed a keen attunement to the forest of the land and felt a strong draw to protect the Everpond. Once the Elves saw how connected the Faeries were to it, they left the land of Athary to the Faerie.

The world of Aura is almost a myth to the Faerie of Athary today. Portals stopped opening and no one has been able to visit. Some say that the world has died and others fear magic has left the world all together. We don't know what has become of Aura or the Faerie who lived there, but we do know the Faerie are thriving in Varial.

Average age of adulthood for Faerie: 17

Average life expectancy for Faerie: 600 years

Average height for Faerie: Males - 4'3", Females - 4'0"

Faerie hair colors: Brown, black, red, purple, blue, green, white, yellow

Faerie eye colors: Purple, blue, red, black

Centaur

The Centaur came third. About nine thousand sun turns ago. They arrived in Varial through a portal after their homeworld of Jikrold had been overtaken by a dark magical force. The Centaur themselves were almost wiped out. We do know a member of this horrible army took pity on them and opened a portal, letting a few hundred Centaur go through before their magic drained. The ancient scholar's docket confirms that at least three hundred Centaur stepped through a portal into Ordrya and requested sanctuary in the new world.

The Centaur felt that they needed revenge. For many sun turns, they prepared their own people to return to their world and fight for it. But the portals to Jikrold could not be opened. While the Centaur gave up on their goal to retake their world, they still maintained their sense of pride in their race and practiced the brutal fighting style they developed.

It was getting difficult to live with the Centaur in Ordrya. Their way of living was so different than the Elves and Faerie both. Eventually, a team of explorers found a land to the north filled with evergreen forests and mountain ranges. The Centaur were given the land and named it Stej Pria.

Average age of adulthood for Centaur: 21

Average life expectancy for Centaur: 350 - 400 years

Average height for Centaur: Males - around 7'5", Females - around 7'0"

Centaur hair colors: Brown, black, red, blonde

Centaur eye colors: Brown, hazel, blue, green

Gnomes

Gnomes came to Varial much like the Faerie did. They arrived about seven thousand sun turns ago. They first came as a team of Gnomish visitors who were exploring different worlds. When they arrived, the Elves thought they may be related to the Faerie.

Gnomes were immediately welcomed in Varial due to their kind-hearted nature and their curiosity about the land itself. At the beginning, the Gnomes were simply common visitors. Like the Faerie, some visitors decided to stay and eventually they populated Varial.

As the Gnomish population grew in Varial, more farming villages began to spring up. When Espachor was discovered, the Gnomes jumped at the chance to live there and cultivate the rich soil of the new land.

Average age of adulthood for Gnomes: 15

Average life expectancy for Gnomes: 550 years

Average height for Gnomes: Males - 4'3", Females - 4'0"

Gnome hair colors: Brown, blonde, black, green, blue, purple, red

Gnome eye colors: Hazel, brown, green, blue, purple

Orcs

The Orcs arrived in Varial around the same time as the Gnomes did. They were very different from the Orcs we know today. At the time, they came from a home world where magic was dying. The first Orcs were very close to Humans. They were still the large Orcs we know and love; but their skin, hair and eyes varied as much as Centaur and Humans do. Some Scholars theorize that Orcs may have been ancient Humans from Earth and they came to Varial to get away from a world where magic would be forgotten.

Once Espachor was discovered, more explorers set out from Ordrya, looking for more lands in Varial. They came back with reports of a cluster of islands to the West, full of great fishing waters and good soil for farming. The Orcs requested to use the land for their own and Bruy Clines was founded.

Over time, the Orcs began to see changes. Children were being born with blue and green hues to their hair and skin. Many Orcs born in Bruy Clines felt drawn to and called to the ocean itself. Eventually, the Orcs who came to Varial were no more. The strange magic of the seas had changed their race forever.

Average age of adulthood for Orcs: 14

Average life expectancy for Orcs: 450 years

Average height for Orcs: Males - 6'8", Females - 6'4"

Orc hair colors: Shades of green or blue

Orc eye colors: Shades of green or blue

Humans

Humans were the last to arrive in Varial. The first Human was recorded about five thousand sun turns ago. Two others arrived almost a century later and then the portals continued to open.

The early Humans opted to remain in Varial. They found a kinship with the Orcs and settled with them in Bruy Clines. The Humans native to Varial are not unlike their Earthen counterparts. The major difference is that the Humans native to Varial can easily awaken their own magic.

Many Humans native to Varial are able to see signs of different races in them. While they may look and seem Human, it is possible most Humans in Varial today have Orc, Faerie, Gnome or Elven blood in them.

Average age of adulthood for Humans: 17

Average life expectancy for Humans: 300 years

Average height for Humans: Males - 5'11", Females - 5'6"

Human hair colors: Brown, red, black, blonde

Human eye colors: Hazel, brown, black, blue, green

Notes: If a Human has Elven, Faerie, Orc or Gnome blood in them, it is possible their hair or eye color mimics the trait of that race.

Dwarves

The Dwarves of Varial were never Dwarves to begin with. They were nothing more than Gnomes. It was a Human traveler who called them "Dwarf" and the name remained.

Quite some time ago, a group of Gnomes living in Ordrya settled near the Lempick Caves. They found ways to cultivate the strange magical fish and flora of the cave system. Eventually, those Gnomes went to live inside the winding cave system.

Over time, their bodies had evolved to be more friendly to a cave dwelling race. Dwarves still maintain the look and personality traits of most Gnomes. However, Dwarves have very pale eyes that range from very light blue or white in color. They are not able to come outside of the caves without eye protection.

Sirens

The Sirens live only on the Southern island of Clen. While it officially belongs to Bruy Clines, the Rulers of the land have always said Clen belongs to the Sirens.

They arrived in Varial through a portal that dumped them into the southern seas of the world. They escaped a world where magic had almost died. Their own race was forgotten and cast off as myth there. The magic of the Sirens was dying along with the magic of the world. If they did not do something drastic, the Sirens would die too.

The legend says that the portal was opened by a visitor from Varial. Because of the unstable magic of that world, the Sirens have split off into other worlds. The scholars docket do record the first Sirens claiming there were at least a thousand going through the portal. Only about a hundred arrived in Varial.

Born of Two Lands

A child Born of Two Lands is not actually a race. Rather, they are a product of the love that exists between two people in Varial. The first recorded child Born of Two Lands was a marriage between an Orc and an Elf.

As time has gone on, Varial is seeing more and more children born to Orcs and Elves, Orcs and Humans, or Humans and Elves. It is still rather uncommon to see Faerie and Gnome children who are Born of two Lands. We know it is impossible for Centaur to bear children with another race. The Centaur have no desire to do so.

Children born of two lands have traits of both parents. Their height, weight, hair and eye color will vary depending on who their parents are. The age they come to adulthood depends on the decision of their parents. The life expectancy of a child Born of Two Lands is usually close to that of the parent with longer life expectancy.

The Beasts of Varial



Varial is home to many creatures. Most of them are quite similar to the various wildlife you will see on Earth. After all, Varial's lands are a lot like Earth's. It's just natural we'd see the same creatures. There are a few beasts in Varial Earth sees as "mythical".

For the most part, the wildlife of Varial act and look like the ones we see on Earth. Stej Pria is our major difference. The animals of Stej Pria are much larger than those in other lands of Varial. It may be the magic of the land itself or it may be the influence of the Centaur. No one is exactly sure why the animals of Stej Pria seem to be two or three times the size of their counterparts.

Beasts of note in Varial

Griffin

The griffin is the guardian animal of the Sentinel Order of Varial. The Sentinels keep flocks of them at their Castle near Zloras. The griffins in the wild live near The Living Mountains of Stej Pria, above the Lempick Caves and anywhere else you may find high peaks in Varial.

Griffins are seen as a protector of Varial. Some say they have magic in them. Others are not certain. What we do know is that many people in Varial facing certain death were rescued by a griffin. It was almost as if the animal appeared out of nowhere to save them.

Dragon

Dragons live in the caves of Varial and don't venture outside often. However, the Dwarves know them well. It is very common to see a dragon riding on the shoulder of a Dwarf or being kept in their home as a member of the family.

Dragons are small. They may be big in other worlds, but in Varial they will never grow larger than a house cat. Most dragons have the ability to speak. They tend to speak only to those they call friends. A dragon who is the familiar of a Naturalist will never speak to anyone but the Naturalists of Varial.

Sea Serpent

Through the oceans of Varial are two dreaded monsters that have plagued sailors on Varial and Earth alike. The first is the sea serpent. It is a large snake like creature that roams the waters. Sea serpents are very docile. They mean no harm to anyone in the waters of Varial.

Sea serpents want to befriend all in the waters. They also do not realize how *large* they are. A full grown sea serpent can be the size of a great ship. When a fully grown sea serpent props its curious head onto the deck of a ship, they only want to say "hello". Unfortunately, the sheer weight of the animal could easily capsize the ship. Fortunately, sea serpents are very quick to rescue the crews of ships they accidentally sink.

Kraken

The kraken is the opposite of the sea serpent. An angry creature that dwells in the deepest parts of the seas. The kraken has multiple tentacle like arms that can easily wrap itself around a ship and squeeze it until it breaks into pieces.

Krakens range in size from that of a lifeboat to that of an Orcish warship. There are many magical wards that protect ships from the kraken, but the best protection from one of these creatures is to man the guns and start shooting.

Mountain Wolf

In the Living Mountains of Stej Pria are packs of wolves called the Mountain Wolf. They are huge specimens of wolves with thick fur to protect them from the bitter cold. Mountain Wolves look like dangerous animals that would rip apart a Centaur, let alone anyone else.

The truth is, they are as gentle as a Gnomish child to the races of Varial. Unless you make them angry. Then, they become exactly what one fears. Mountain Wolves have proved to be great companions to the people of Varial. The Faerie Sagebloom had a Mountain Wolf as a familiar and Felix the Breaker had one as a pet. Many Gnomes keep them on their farms and many Centaur have them as a hunting companion.

Unicorn

Unicorns are rare. Very rare. They are only found in one place in Varial and that is in Everpond Grove. The myths from Earth must have come from Varial, because the person who finds a unicorn is guaranteed a boon. Unicorns hide themselves very

well from the races of Varial. Even the Faerie who protect the Everpond almost never see one. There is little more known about the elusive creatures.

Magical Animals

Sometimes, an animal in Varial is born at just the perfect time and place where the magic of the land seeps into them. These animals become more like a person and less like an animal. Some are afraid of what people may do to them and they hide from the races of Varial. Others embrace what they are and become a part of the populace.

There is one story of a loved rabbit in Ordrya who was born magical. The rabbit spent all of its days in the Elven village, exchanging stories and teaching the Elves about the Holly Forest. He became like a citizen of the village and when he passed of old age, he was given Elven burial rites.

The Lands of Varial



The basics of each land in Varial is covered in the sourcebook. However, there are other landmarks, villages and places one might want to know about before beginning a campaign.

As you can see, many villages, towns and cities are unmarked in Varial. That isn't because they don't exist, it's because you can create them.

To get a feeling for the size of Varial, one has to compare it to Earth. Ordrya itself is the size of North and South America combined. The main island in Bruy Clines is the size of the country of Mexico and Crab Claw Bay is a bit smaller than Australia. Stej Pria is the size of the Continent of Europe and half of the Continent of Asia. Athary and Espachor both are a little larger than the Continent of Africa.

One would think travel would take ages, but Varial has magic. Travel isn't by horse or by foot everywhere. Ships are powered by magic and journeys across the ocean take just a day or two from Bruy Clines to Ordrya. Those who are quite magical can use quick portals to travel, but it does exhaust the user and they aren't able to do this often.

Ordrya

Ordrya is the largest expanse of land in Varial and Ordrya is roughly 75% populated by Elves and 25% of the other races.

The North of Ordrya is the capital city of Zloras which is the oldest city in Varial. Zloras Castle hosts the Council of Rulers once every sun turn. The Castle itself is almost the size of a city and borders the Northern coastline of Ordrya. Zloras City is to the South of the castle.

In the Southwest of Ordrya is the Lempick Mountains that also houses the deep Lempick Caves. The caves are filled with magic and the Dwarves live there comfortably. Outsiders do go into the cave system and usually come out with stories of great Dwarven hospitality. There is still much undiscovered in the Lempick Caves. Even the Dwarves admit the magic of the caves is elusive.

To the East of the Lempick Caves and Mountains is the city of Hollyhead. Just East of the village is the Holly Forest. This forest takes up a large strip of land from the coast of Ordrya all the way to the edge of Hollyhead. The Holly Forest has never been fully explored. There is so much magic inside of it and so many myths. Explorers have gone in, but never returned. Some have gone in and returned with little to no memory. Others have only made it a few miles before turning back.

North of the Lempick Caves and Mountains is the cluster of lakes known as Waters of Oshwait. Just in the center is the ancient city of Oshwait. Near the lakes are a number of small fishing and farming villages along with the Great School of Magic near the northern lake. The nearby coast is home to the seedy Oshwait Harbor.

Athary

Athary is a forested land that is comprised of roughly 85% Faerie and 15% of the other races. Most of the other races in Athary live in Aura.

Aura is the capital of the land, located near the center of Athary. Aura looks to be a sleepy Faerie village that sprawls out for miles. In the center of the city is Aura Castle where the Rulers of Athary live and work.

To the Northwest of Aura is Windstone Falls. The Falls are a great spectacle of nature, tumbling down from the mountain range into the river below. Windstone

Village is just south of the Falls. It was once a poor Faerie village that is now a bustling town.

The North of Athary is Everpond Grove. It is a huge forest thick with magic. Inside the forest is The Everpond -- the place that the Faeries say is the source of their magic.

Espachor

Espachor was once populated by Gnomes and is now about 50% Gnome, 35% Human and 15% of the other races. Most of the Humans and other races live in Queross.

Queross is the capital city of Espachor and the largest city in Varial. Queross takes up the inner portion of Espachor itself. The land was once farmlands and village, but has since been taken over by the capital of Technomancy and the land itself is forever changed.

The coasts of Espachor are still the same villages that the Gnomes have always come to love. To the East is Wolves Crossing, a bustling harbor that borders a farming village and the twin Wolf Rivers.

Bruy Clines

Bruy Clines is a land that belongs to the Orcs. However, the Orcs will tell you that it now belongs to the Humans as well. Bruy Clines is roughly 60/40 Orcs and Humans with very few other races living in the islands. We do know of a small Elven village in Crab Claw Bay.

The main island of Bruy Clines is "Bruy Port". It hosts the capital city also named Bruy Port along with a few other towns that mainly produce fish and weapons for Varial.

Crab Claw Bay is Northwest of the main island. It is not only a very popular holiday spot for Varial, but it is also the best fishing spot in Varial as well. North of Crab Claw Bay is Middlemont Cay which is a contested island between Bruy Clines and Stej Pria due to its hunting grounds and rich farming soil.

Stej Pria

Stej Pria belongs to the Centaur. No other races are allowed to live in Stej Pria, but outsiders are welcomed to visit Nolodeske. Outsiders are permitted to visit the rest of Stej Pria, but only with permission from the rulers themselves.

The Draujik River feeds into the ocean of Stej Pria to the south. The river winds around the land, creating a large island snuggled into the continent. This island houses the capital of Stej Pria which is the city of Nolodeske and beyond it are the Great Centaur Hunting Grounds. These grounds are forbidden to anyone who is not a Centaur and outsiders have never been allowed inside.

North of Nolodeske is the Living Mountains, a great range of mountains with many magical properties. Centaur and explorers alike climb these mountains in search of magical discoveries.

Magic in Varial



Varial is a world full of magic. It seeps from the land itself. You are either born with magic or you are not. If you are born with magic, it awakens in you when you are fairly young. The only exception to this being a rare traveler that was born with magic and it does not awaken in them until they arrive in Varial. Of course, Jeannie Pryor and David Quesada were two of these people.

Varial has four talents of magic. You either have a talent for Natural magic, Traditional magic, Dark magic or Technomancy. Technomancy is a highly contested type of magic and Faerie do not accept it as a talent. Technomancy is indeed a talent, whether the Faerie accept it or not.

Why is magic so important? Because everyone can utilize magic. Fighters, Archers, Mages and Technomancers alike can all use their own magic. Having a non magical

skill does not mean you have no magical talent in you. For most people, it means you do. Thora the Ranger had quite the talent for Natural magic and it is why her arrows almost always flew to their target.

Magic awakens in various ways, but one thing is for certain -- your magic is your own. Everyone falls under a specific talent of magic, but the type of magic they use and how they use it is up to them and them alone. It is why Leafwing was unable to tell Jeannie Pryor *how* to use her magic. She was simply able to encourage and teach her about the talents she had.

Types of Magic in Varial

Natural magic

Natural magic is said to spring from the Everpond. It is a magic where the user is very attuned to the world around them. Naturalists can speak to the wildlife, empower the forests and commune with nature itself. It is a magic that allows the user to explore the world around them in a brand new light.

Traditional magic

Traditional magic was the first magic in Varial to be used. It is the magic that is utilized by most Physicians (though some utilize Natural magic too). It is the magic of most Mages and most Elves. Knights and Sentinels typically use Traditional magics when training and fighting.

Dark magic

Dark magic is a difficult talent to be born with. Just because the magic is dark does not mean the person is. However, some born with dark magic tend to move towards Necromancy or sordid things. There are some very talented and very good Mages who have dark magic.

Technomancy

Technomancy is using the person's own magic and channeling it through a small computer they have built called a "device". This allows the user to empower the device and use it. Technomancy itself is a newer magic and was not accepted as a talent until recently. However, more and more people born in Espachor are finding their talent to lie in Technomancy alone.

Wizards and Bards in Varial

There are two types of magic users who are very rare in Varial. One is more rare than the other. The most rare in Varial is the Bard. A Bard is a type of a Wizard who can use the magic of the Sirens of Clen along with their own magic. They can use the power of the spoken and written word to create magic itself.

The scholars docket speak of these Bards that have graced Varial with their presence. They often travel to other worlds, bringing magic along with them wherever they go. Bards tend to only be discovered once every few hundred sun turns. Most do not stay in Varial long.

Wizards are the people in Varial who have more than one magical talent. Leafwing is one such Wizard. David Quesada is another.

A Wizard should never be played as a class in Varial. Wizards are quite powerful. The Bard should use a Wizard as part of a story or perhaps a way to help the party in the event they are stuck.

Creating Items and Gear



As you know, Varial begins with every character getting a base piece of armor and weapons. Since there are no levels in Varial, the characters gain power by their items and their gear.

It is not recommended you continue to give the players items that go up and up in health pool bonuses. This is because of the fact that the dice remain the same. If a Knight ends up with a health pool of 155 and you match an opponent, combat will take a very long time.

What is recommended is that you get creative with the abilities, the items and the gear. Create items that will help the characters during the story. Whether that is in combat, during a plot twist or just along the journey.

An example of an important item is that you have a powerful opponent planned for the future that has a health pool of 256. It will take players a very long time to KO this opponent. But, one of the characters received an item that has a chance to do 25 extra damage. Another character has an item that has the chance to cause 5 extra damage each turn for the duration of the combat. This will make the combat easier to finish and the players will probably enjoy it more. However, if the players

do not keep those items for the right time, this powerful opponent may kill the entire party and reset the game.

You do not have to reward all characters in the party after each combat encounter or scenario. Sometimes, only one character receiving an item is fine.

Creating Armor and Weapons

As a reminder, the base weapons and armor are:

Base Weapons:

- Single handed sword +2 to health
- Shield +6 to health
- Single handed axe +2 to health
- Greatsword +5 to health
- Greataxe + 5 to health
- Knuckles +4 to health
- Dagger + 2 to health
- Staff +4 to health
- Physician's Staff +3 to health
- Guns +2 to health
- Bow +3 to health
- Crossbow +2 to health

Base Armor

- Plate + 9 to health
- Chain maille + 7 to health
- Leather + 5 to health
- Enchanted Fabric + 3 to health
- Clothing +2 to health

Think of how much or little health bonus each piece of armor and weapon gives to a character. It is always a good idea to give the party a little more armor and a more powerful weapon as time goes on. To parse this out and not have an overload of new gear and weapons, it could be easier to reward a single character or two with a new piece of armor or weapon instead of the entire party.

Doing things this way will also encourage the players to work together more often depending on which character is stronger.

To create a piece of gear or weapon, you will use the "Items and Gear" section of the character sheet to see what each party member has. It is a good idea to have some weapons and armor already in mind before the campaign begins. After a challenging scenario or a combat, you may reward a party member or two with the new armor or weapon.

For example

Before the campaign began, you had created a special piece of chain maille with a +9 health bonus. You also created a gun with a +3 health bonus and a pair of Enchanted Fabric pants with a +6 health bonus. Your party has finished combat against a regular opponent. You decide the reward here is to allow the Naturalist to find the Enchanted Fabric pants. The Naturalist can choose to use them or to give them to another party member.

The Naturalist has chosen to keep the pants. The Naturalist updates their character sheet to note they have this item. Their base Enchanted Fabric armor is now gone and they will add +3 to their overall health pool. (They began with a health pool that had a +3 bonus for the base Enchanted Fabric. So they only get 3 more points to create a total of 6.)

Some weapons and armor may have their own abilities attached to them. What the ability is and what it does is up to you as the Bard. The abilities on these weapons and armor are used just like a class ability. They can only be used once per combat. It is important to specify whether or not the weapon or armor will be useless after the ability is used. Or, how many uses the ability has.

Creating Items

Creating an item in Varial is as endless as the campaigns you can create. There is no wrong item to reward a party member with. Items can add a bonus to health, have an ability that is or is not finite, or even help with story progression later.

For further clarification of the handbook, Bard resources, character creation sheets, maps and item ideas, please visit the website at varialseries.com to explore more of Varial.

Credits:

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Map artwork by: Luca Coppola

Class artwork by: Ajid Wiputra

Race artwork by: Brett Casanos

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