

Since the dawn of its existence, Illyria has been a land of conflict. Stretching into antiquity before common history, the people who call the continent home have been locked in endless struggle. A placid land with sweeping landscapes, verdant plains, and a lengthy coast, Illyria has long been seen as the ideal capital for many an empire. Throughout that history, a number of powerful men have seen fit to spill the blood of thousands to control it.

In near pre-history, the majority of the continent was controlled by the mysterious fey, a people who led surprisingly complex and rich lives as evidenced by the vast and massive ruins they left behind. When their kingdom finally fell to the fledgling humanity, society collapsed into a dark age that set technology back six-hundred years. Ironically, the very people who cast the fey out saw them as foreigners in their own land and felt deep regret when the land regressed into turmoil.

Mankind, the inheritors of the land after the destruction of the fey, is not native to Illyria. One wouldn't think that, though, seeing how quickly humans adapted to the landscape, but they are truly the newest residents to the peninsula. Through their tenacity, improvisation, and sheer ability to outbreed their foes, mankind quickly washed over the land like a plague, leaving nothing but his own image remaining and reducing all non-humans to a status less than citizen.

After taking over the western side of the continent in what are now Kourmar and Tortha, the people united beneath the banner of a burgeoning tribal warrior named Rugnar Darcidus, the man who became Rugnar the Black. Through his brutality in battle and wisdom in politics, he handed the remainder of the continent to humanity in a manner of decades, his capital seated on the Great Lake Tiberon, which divides Tortha in twain. In the events following his death, his empire slowly crumbled into five nations divided primarily by land features: Tortha, Kourmar, Feylanor, Nycenia, and Hysperia.

The many land forms that make Illyria's countries distinct are what make it a gem to behold. The continent is split in half by three rivers that originate on Lake Promarc: Lannis to the south, Torre to the north, and Hyspus to the east. The water from the lake itself washes down annually from the Kourrac Mountains that wrap around Kourmar. On its northeastern corner, Illyria narrows into the Cape of Hyspus and Isles of Lask. To the southeast, the continent tapers into Narcena's Horn and the Denar Archipelago.

To the west and nearly forgotten, Vasena rests in the wide arms of the Al-Muat Desert, a sea of sand divided by the narrow river Al-Hyat. Close off from the rest of Illyria by the Black Mountains to the south and a chain to the north called The Devil's Fist, the west is a mystery to all but the most-learned of scholars. It is assumed that the land ends just on the other side of the empty sprawl, but no one is truly sure.

It is on such a landscape, so diverse and divided, that many peoples and ways are forged. And it is around their great rivers and sweeping plains that so many groups clash. The people now affix their eyes upon each other with looks of bloodlust, greed, and minds of survival. Illyria itself now hums with the din of war, its landscape bearing witness to the conflict of its short-lived denizens.

Such as it always has.

Just as it always will.