

TOWN RECORDS

"So you want to start some sort of record of all the mercenaries who've moved on from Gloomhaven?" a short, bearded man asks with a scowl. "Sounds a little arrogant to me, but I'm sure I've got a spare record book somewhere in the stacks."

He puts down his pen into the spine of the book he was inking and steps out from behind the counter at the front of the Town Records building. "I'll be back in a bit. Don't steal anything!"

He gets in one more good scowl before turning and walking towards the back of the building, nearly tripping on his overly long robe multiple times. As he slips behind one of the many shelves of books, your attention shifts to the building itself.

The Town Records building is a large, circular structure on the west side of the Coin District. Built as a status symbol for the town of wealthy merchants, anyone who actually enters can quickly see that the massive library is woefully understocked.

Some sections, such as the teachings and philosophies of the Great Oak, are reasonably full, but many others have just a handful of books occupying long, barren shelves. Perhaps this was why some of your merchant friends were so adamant about you taking a trip to the Town Records building in the first place. Recording your party's exploits creates more content to fill these empty halls.

With this in mind, your thoughts turn to the open book directly in front of you – the one the clerk was working on. There are two texts on the counter, and it looks as if the clerk was in the process of transcribing the writing of one into the other.

Looking more closely, however, you notice the titles are different. The complete book is titled "The Rise of Human Civilization," while the other is titled "The History of Gloomhaven, by Dominic Scrim." Intrigued, you begin to read what he was writing:

At some point thousands of years ago, humans stopped hiding in caves and began to form societies out in the open, erecting modest farming villages that eventually grew into the massive sprawling cities we see today.

Living out in the open was never easy, though. There were wars, both amongst themselves and with other races such as the Valraths to the south. More troubling, however, were the constant raids from the more barbaric races of the world – Inox and Vermling tribes who had no concept of peace and wanted only to kill and destroy.


Walls were always necessary, as were the armed men who guarded those walls. For this reason, the civilization of man grew and developed under a militaristic rule. Those skilled in warfare held the highest positions in society and governed from a perspective of keeping their charges safe from outside attacks.

While this regime of strength kept the human race alive and functioning, it did stagnate the growth of other cultural facets of society. What the civilization lacked in culture, though, it made up for with rapid expansion and settlements spreading out from the north to every corner of the continent. This created a strong foothold to ensure that humans would continue to prosper and never again have to go back to hiding in caves.

"Best to start at the beginning, eh?" Dominic now stands before you with a small amount of leather-bound parchment. "I found this in the back – it should do well for your purposes – but I see you've found something as well."

He shifts his feet a bit and hands you the parchment. "Most people see Gloomhaven as some backwoods caravan stop," he says in an accusatory tone. "A necessary evil in the middle of a deadly wilderness. "But I disagree. I love Gloomhaven, and I believe its history needs to be documented. I think this town plays a far more important role in the history of this continent than anyone realizes, and I'm going to prove it."

Dominic flashes a brief nervous smile and then grabs up the two books on the counter. "But it's not finished yet. Not by a long shot. Come back later, and I might have more history to share."

 STOP reading until Gloomhaven has reach prosperity level 3

You walk into the Town Records building and are immediately struck by how different it looks. It might just be the lighting, but there seems to be more books on the shelves and less of a scowl on Dominic's face. The short, bearded man approaches you.

"Ah, how good of you to come," he says. "No doubt to record the further exploits of your friends. I was most assuredly derisive of your motives when you first walked in here, but I must say that the idea has grown on me a little."

Dominic slaps you on the back, then wanders around behind the counter. "Whether you like it or not, you are becoming important fixtures of this community. And I am sure that I have you to thank, at least in some small way, for the increased number of books lining the shelves."

He waves his arms about, his hands barely visible beneath his robe's long sleeves. "They're not good books, mind you, but they're books nonetheless.

"Plus," he says with a small smile, "I've had more time to work on my own tome."

Dominic opens the small collection of parchment he has been working on and passes it to you. "I'm still focused on the big picture right now, but I should have more soon. I thought you might be interested in taking a look."

Though human expansion has not always been greeted with kindness and civility by the other races, currently humans are more-or-less at peace with their neighbors. After a costly peace treaty with the Valraths to the south and a understanding with the prominent Inox tribes, the only main threats are the animalistic Vermlings who continue to assault human cities, sometimes for no discernible reason.

Humans have mostly stayed away from Harrower territory out of fear, and the Harrowers seem to return the favor. The same goes for the Savvas, who live underground in the largely uninhabitable mountainous regions in the north.

Orchids and Quatryls both come from far-off continents across the sea and seem far more interested in commerce and cultural exchange than conquest.

And so human society has certainly benefited culturally from its interaction with other races. Many of the most

beautiful structures in human civilization would not be possible without the machinery of the Quatryls, the elemental mastery of the Savvas, and the architectural designs of the Valraths. The meditative Orchids have even influenced a number of human religions, though the followers of the Great Oak - a stringent group who believes a giant tree housed in the center of the capital watches over and protects everyone - remain unchanged.

And while the human military keeps the civilization alive, it is really the commerce with the other races that ultimately allows the civilization to flourish. It seems, then, as the wilds grew tamer, that a paradigm shift away from militaristic rule and towards mercantile rule was only a matter of time.

"Like I said, I'm still working on the broader strokes," Dominic says, "But my research has been providing some interesting information. It's all very vague at the moment, though. I need to find better sources. Not just Savvas howling poems."

He takes back the book and frowns. "Savvas write the worst poetry, and it is incredibly hard to translate."

STOP reading until Gloomhaven has reached prosperity level 4

"I hope we understand each other, Mister Scrim." A well-decorated soldier stands in the center of the Town Records building as you enter. The librarian, Dominic, seems rather small by comparison, but he is not at all intimidated.

"Oh, I understand you perfectly well," Dominic says, "but I don't think you're understanding my position. I am trying to find the truth."

The soldier looks up as you approach, then looks back down at the bearded man. "Just think about what I said." He begins to gesture around him as he walks towards the door. "I'd hate to have to tear down this whole place."

Dominic waves at you grimly. "Hey there! Glad to see you stop by. Who knows what sort of shortsighted, lowbrow lengths that thug would have gone through to get his point across."

He shakes his head and then fluffs his beard. "It's just a difference of opinion, though. In my research, I've apparently asked the wrong people the wrong questions. It's amazing how reactionary thick-skulled people can get about what is written down on a piece of parchment.

"It's not like anyone's going to even read this little text of mine." Dominic coughs. "Um, well, except you, of course. Is that why you've come by? I've finished up the broad history if you wanted to take a look."

As human civilization expanded across the continent, two major changes occurred. The first was that merchants grew into prominent positions within the cities due to wealth gained from lucrative trade routes both within human civilization and with other races. The second change was that the wilds, which were once so dangerous, became much less so, especially in the center of the continent, as areas were converted to farmland and peace was made with the surrounding races in one way or another.

The military taxed the trade heavily across the continent and the merchants grew more and more resentful as larger portions of their earnings were demanded for less justification. The military did nothing and grew fat off the work of others.

This all came to a head in the capital when the leader of the merchant's guild, Simon Wainwright, organized a coup of the city's military by hiring an entire army of mercenaries with the guild's money and taking control of the city's keep. Very little force was actually required, as the city guard was outnumbered and woefully under-trained. The siege of the keep lasted less than two days - not nearly enough time for reinforcements to arrive from the surrounding cities.

Once in power, the merchant's guild quickly won the favor of the citizenry with sweeping social changes, allowing for a great many freedoms and relieving them from the heavy taxation of the military. Once the commoners were on the side of the merchants, there was little hope for the military of regaining control, at which point the mercenary army was no longer required and the military was offered a decent salary to continue keeping watch over the city.

After the capital was reformed, the Merchant's Revolution spread outward from there, quickly deposing the militaristic rule across the continent. As of the writing of this document, only one city remains under the governance of a military presence: Gloomhaven.

"Next I really want to get into the development of Gloomhaven and this clash between the merchants and the military in the city," Dominic begins. "But, as you can see, the military isn't all that happy about it." Dominic hesitates. "I was, uh, hoping you all could do me a favor, actually. In order to continue to put my pen to paper, I think I'd better get the backing of a powerful merchant to keep me safe.

"They're all sympathetic to me getting down this history, of course, but they are a little hesitant to publicly support the venture. I'm hoping you could do some convincing for me. You might have the most luck with Councilman Greymare."

Unlock Scenario: Oozing Grove (72) (H-12)

STOP reading until Oozing Grove has been completed

"Ah, my esteemed patrons!" Dominic greets you at the door of the Town Records building. "I cannot thank you enough for securing the support of Councilman Greymare."

He leads you through the half-filled shelves of books towards a small room in the back of the building. "When I heard the good news, I immediately got to work and continued my writing."

Dominic sits down at a large table in the room, his book sitting before him. He gestures you toward chairs, as well. "It's still needs more detail - more research - but I am proud of it so far. Why don't you take a look at what I have?"

Nestled in the calm waters of Merchant's Bay, Gloomhaven was founded over three hundred years ago as a harbor for trade ships traveling across the Misty Sea. Though newer than most human settlements, it expanded rapidly because of its importance as a hub of commerce for humans and other races.

Gloomhaven is integral to the human economy because it rests in the only viable spot on the eastern coastline for harboring large amounts of ships. That the town is

still under military rule causes no end of aggravation to merchants across the continent. All imports and exports are heavily taxed.

The simple truth of the matter is that Gloomhaven is still a vastly dangerous city. Where other settlements have grown far safer over the course of human expansion, Gloomhaven seems to only grow more unsafe, despite countless efforts to tame the surrounding wilds. It is almost as if there is a dark presence outside the walls, bent on tearing apart the city and its citizens.

Of course, not all share this opinion. Some merchants believe that the military is actively encouraging the dangerous elements beyond the walls - inciting tribes of Vermlings to attack the city, for instance - to remind everyone that the military is necessary for Gloomhaven's survival. It may be a cynical view, but with the Merchant's Revolution toppling every other military government across the continent, it is hard to deny that the military only remains in power in Gloomhaven because of the persistent outside threats.

Dominic wrings his hands. "I know. Maybe you were expecting more, but I assure you this is just the beginning.

"In my research, I've found a number of sources that allude to the Demon War - the war between humans and the Valraths to the south that occurred hundreds of years ago - to be one of the central causes that led to the founding of Gloomhaven, but the whole thing doesn't make much sense to me."

Dominic begins to stroke his beard. "I mean, this war happened long

before Gloomhaven ever existed, so I just don't see the connection.

"But I must find out. There's a much deeper story to all of this, and the Demon War has to be the key. I've requested some books from the southern Valrath libraries that I hope might shed some light on the matter, but we currently don't have the funds to transport them. We don't have the funds for much, really."

Dominic stands from the table and walks you back towards the door. "Just keep doing what you're doing, and I'm sure some money will trickle down to me eventually."

Unlock Event: Add City Event 80 to the deck

STOP reading until Gloomhaven has reached prosperity level 5

Dominic trots quickly from behind the counter to meet you as you enter the Town Records building. "Just the mercenaries I wanted to see! I have something to show you."

After vigorously shaking your hand, he turns and ushers you to follow as he moves toward the back room. "The texts from the southern continent finally arrived, and they have been very helpful. They've painted a much clearer picture of the Demon War."

Dominic opens the back door and gestures for you to sit down in front of his open book. "I'd like you to read the latest entry and then we'll have more to talk about."

In the early years of human expansion, it was inevitable that the military would clash with the burgeoning nation of fierce Valrath to the south. Both races had a thirst for power, and this came to a head in the grassland area

of Stormbrew. Both nations claimed ownership of the region and small skirmishes between settlements quickly escalated into an all-encompassing war.

The fighting raged for six years. The full attention of both civilizations bore down on these blood-soaked plains. Both races were equally fierce, stubborn, and filled with an unquenchable rage.

And after six years, the war had taken a heavy toll on both nations. With all of their resources being poured into the war, both races fell victim to numerous threats from within and from outside their borders – starvation, disease, and crime ran rampant. Before too long, both would crumble and be destroyed under the weight of the conflict.

So it came to pass, directly before what was to be one of the greatest and costliest battles between the two great commanders of the war, that an Aesther appeared between the two armies and offered a means for peace. This Aesther was the first of his kind that either of these two races had ever seen, and when he presented his offer, the commanders were terribly skeptical. In the end, however, they agreed to give the Aesther a chance.

Neither commander trusted the other or the Aesther, so when the Aesther told them to follow him to the east, both leaders brought a battalion of soldiers with them. After a few days of marching, though, a great fog rolled across the plains, and soon the two commanders were

separated from their battalions. They emerged from the fog alone – just two commanders and the Aesther standing in the middle of a great ruin, an entire city of overgrown stone from a long-forgotten civilization.

Standing among the ruins, the Aesther turned and told these two commanders a story. He told them of the great Upheaval and the true history of their two races. When the story was finished, the two commanders made peace on the spot.

The Valraths renounced their vicious, expansionist nature and the two races worked together to build a civilization around strength and commerce. The story of the Upheaval was only told orally, passed down from leader to leader. And many generations after the peace treaty was signed, the descendants of the two commanders began work constructing a new city as a monument to the treaty. A city built on the very spot where the Aesther told his tale. The city of Gloomhaven.

You look up from the book to see Dominic staring intently at you. A smile grows on his face.

“Right?” He says. “Surely you have the same questions I do. I mean, for starters, what was this Upheaval?”

He begins pacing around the room, stumbling over his robes multiple times. “Was it some sort of catastrophe? What could the Aesther have possibly said to stop an entire war? And Gloomhaven was built on top of an ancient city? We’re all aware of the ruins beneath us, but I always thought it was an earlier settlement destroyed by raiders. But the ruins predate humanity itself? Is the Upheaval what destroyed the original city?”

Dominic coughs and adjusts his beard. "There are, well, too many questions. I cannot possibly continue without the answers.

"I've pored over all the texts from the Valrath library, but this story told by the Aesther is in none of them. The books say it was only passed down orally, but that is hard to believe. There has to be a written record somewhere."

He turns back to you and shrugs. "I may need your help in the near future, but for now I need to make more contacts and try to gather more information about where a record of the Upheaval story could possibly be. I'll send for you when I know more."

STOP reading until Gloomhaven has reached prosperity level 6

"Ah, glad to see you got my note," Dominic shakes your hands and then remains conspicuously quiet until you enter the back room and the door is closed and locked.

"I think I have the answer we're looking for," he begins. "I was right. There is a written record of the Aesther's story. It appears in the Codex of Directives, a book that should only be read by the highest official in each region.

"There was a copy delivered to Gloomhaven. But don't worry, you won't have to raid the Ghost Fortress to get it. Because it never arrived."

Dominic looks at you intently. "It took a lot of legwork, but I eventually sniffed out a guard in town who was protecting the caravan that delivered the book from the capital many years ago. Apparently the caravan was attacked by a group of Inox near the southern tip of the Dagger Forest."

"The guard was dragged back to the Inox camp before he managed to

escape and find his way to Gloomhaven. Oddly enough, no one was ever sent to find the camp and recover the caravan's goods. They probably didn't want to incite more wrath from the Inox.

"So the book may still be out there, and, with a little grease, the guard told me exactly where you can find the camp."

Unlock Scenario: Rockslide Ridge **73** (N-5)

STOP reading until Rockslide Ridge has been completed.

Dominic approaches you with a sullen demeanor as you enter the Town Records building.

"It feels weird seeing you after so short a time. Obviously you just delivered the Codex of Directives to me, and normally it would take longer to fully study and transcribe the Aesther's story, but...well, we have a significant problem."

As usual, you are directed to the back room, but as Dominic opens the door, you see a scene of chaos and destruction. The table is overturned and torn books are scattered across the floor.

"They took everything," Dominic sighs. "They took the Codex; they took my book... Barbarians."

He sees your confused, concerned look and continues. "They called themselves the Vigil. They said I was messing with things that I shouldn't be. They stormed in wearing full armor as I was pouring over the Codex just minutes after you left. They said they were tasked with keeping the Codex of Directives safe, and then they began looking for any copies I had made, ultimately settling on just stealing the history of Gloomhaven I was writing."

Dominic slams a destroyed book down on the floor. "It's infuriating! The Vigil? Who in the name of the Oak are the Vigil? Primitives is what they are! Look at how they treated my books!"

Dominic closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. Eventually a small smile creeps across his face. "We do have two things going for us, though. One is that I think we are all incredibly determined to get that book back. I'm going to reach out to my contacts, maybe do a little research. I will to find out who the Vigil are and where to find them, and then I'm going to send you in to kill every last one of them.

"The second thing is that I have a very sharp memory." Dominic produces a crumpled scrap of paper from his robes. "I read through about half of the Aesther's story before the thugs came in swinging their swords. I think I've produced a pretty accurate transcription."

This is the story told by the Aesther Naaret to the commanders of the Demon War:

The ruins on which you now stand were once the capital of an expansive, thriving civilization. There were no Valraths or humans, just a single race, growing and maturing in harmony with its surroundings.

In this place, ancient man had many noble pursuits. He looked into the very large expanse above us, contemplating the stars, and he also looked at the very tiny things that make up everything on this earth. The ancient man's quest for knowledge was vast, and it stretched too far.

With great intensity, the ancient man's gaze turned to something outside this world - to the infinite planes of

being that existed beyond his own. He yearned to travel to them, and to learn what he could from them.

And it was because of this desire that a rift between worlds was created, and a great calamity was brought forth. For this new plane housed not the answers to ancient man's infinite questions, but only the creatures of nightmares - demons bent on the ruination of everything he held dear. Despite all of ancient man's knowledge and tools, his cities and people were ravaged beyond repair. His walls turned to rubble and his family was torn apart, eaten, and driven into caves, where they huddled in the dark and waited for the end to come.

This is known as the great Upheaval...

"It's not the full thing," Dominic says. "But it's a start. It answers a lot of questions, but I have a lot more. I'll let you know when I have more to go on."

STOP reading until Gloomhaven has reached prosperity level 7

"Thanks for coming," Dominic greets you at the door. "I'll keep this short. I've discovered that the Vigil is a bunch of pro-military skullcrackers who feel it is their sole duty to guard against the Upheaval from happening again, but they do so by keeping any evidence of the Upheaval secret from everyone else. Seems to me like a pretty backwards way of helping."

He hands you a small piece of paper. "They operate out of the Traveler's District. Just follow the map. Listen, you don't have to kill them all if you don't want, just get back the Codex and my book."

Unlock Scenario: Vault of Secrets **77** (B-17)

STOP reading until Vault of Secrets has been completed

"Oh, my, you've returned!" Dominic springs up in excitement as you enter the Town Records building. He jogs toward you a little too quickly, trips on his robe and lands flat on his face.

"Ow. Uh, no matter," he says waving off the incident. "I imagine you've recovered the books? Please tell me you've brought the books back!" As you nod, he jumps to his feet, smiling broadly. "Come then! It's time we got to the bottom of this – preferably in your company in case those maniacs come back."

Once in the back room, Dominic quickly opens the Codex of Directives and flips to the proper page. "Let's finish the story, shall we?"

The end did not come for the ancient man as he huddled in the darkness of his cave, insane and broken. The harbingers of the Upheaval, a great army of demons, had succeeded in bringing a once-powerful and glorious civilization to its complete and utter end. This had been a challenge, but hunting down the wretched creatures who now huddled together like rats in a cage – there was not sport in that.

The world lay shattered and ruined before them, and the Gloom grew bored. The forces withdrew and were dispatched to destroy some other world, and the Gloom decided it would be far more interesting and challenging to manipulate the wretched scraps of this ancient race into destroying themselves.

One group of ancient man, who had fled far to the south, were taken by the Gloom, their blood tainted with that of the demons'. The result was unrecognizable – a feral, animalistic race of half-demon, half-man.

And then the Gloom watched and waited. The Gloom stood silent as man emerged from his cave and began to rebuild himself. The Gloom smiled at the newfound arrogance of man as he began to expand his territories and take back the land from the unforgiving wilds. The Gloom waited for the day when its two creations met each other on the field of battle and destroyed each other completely.

"The Gloom..." Dominic mumbles. "Every time I think I've gotten to the bottom of this, something new emerges."

He slumps in his chair. "This sounds bad. I guess the Aesther convinced the commanders to stop the war in order to avoid fulfilling the expectations of the Gloom, but the Vigil seem convinced that the Gloom will still return one day to destroy us all anyway. I'm not sure what to think."

Dominic shrugs. "I'll spend some more time studying the text, but I don't know what it's going to take to find a breakthrough on this. In all the books I've read, I've never seen a single mention of this Gloom until now. I'll let you know if I find anything."

□ STOP reading until scenario 51 has been completed

"Well, when I said 'breakthrough,' I wasn't expecting you to go out, find the Gloom, and destroy it," Dominic says as you enter the Town Records building. "Certainly nothing that extreme, but it did the trick."

"I was able to study some of the writing on the walls of the chamber you found beneath the Void, and I've discovered quite a bit of information about the Gloom."

Dominic sets his book down in front of you. "If you'll permit me, I have one final entry in my history of Gloomhaven for you to read."

The study of interplanar travel was really the brainchild of a single man: Bastian the Seeker. During his studies of what was beyond this world, an unimaginably powerful being called out to Bastian from across the infinite planes, invading and corrupting his dreams. The being promised him knowledge and power

beyond what any single plane could hold. Bastian began his work to open a rift between his own plane and that of the being poisoning him as it called from beyond. He was so consumed and overtaken by greed and vice, that when the rift was finally opened and the Upheaval began, the unnameable evil was able to merge seamlessly with Bastian's form, birthing what came to be known as the Gloom.

It has been conjectured by Aesther scholars that the evil being has no form of its own, but simply travels from plane to plane, inhabiting a vessel and using it to sow death and destruction for its own amusement. By all accounts, this being is immortal and eternal. If its vessel is destroyed, it will simply find a new one, on this plane or the next.

Dominic closes the book. "I thank you for all the help you provided in the writing this history, and I truly hope that's the last we've all seen of the Gloom."

Dominic's smile fades as he nervously fidgets with a scrap of paper. "Well, there was one last detail that gave me pause, I found some writings in the Void that I simply could not decipher. They are vaguely similar to a runic language I once encountered up north, but the exact structure is unfamiliar." He hands the paper to you in silence.

Λ17Δ V7N7L7 VΛS1 H N ΛH7Z7 Λ1Y