

## GEARFORGED

The gearforged are the children of Rava, the Gear Goddess of Fate and Industry. Her priests were the first to forge bodies of brass and copper with cunningly wrought gears and well-balanced mechanisms to support thought and action. Each such body is the safe harbor of a soul that once lived in flesh; a special ritual (see sidebar) is required to transfer a living creature's soul into the housing that makes it gearforged. Once created, a gearforged can in theory live forever, though in practice most wind down or are destroyed by the ravages of time and the difficulty of surviving as a well-crafted machine.



### Making a Gearforged

The most important moment for many gearforged is the moment of their remaking when they leave their flesh body behind and enter their new, clockwork body of brass and steel. One can spend a fortune on these new bodies or simply scrape together something that will work—though only barely—if they are aging or deathly ill. The details don't matter a great deal, since the iron body can be rebuilt.

Without exception, the gearforged are shaped like humanoids, and the vast majority appears in one of two styles: roughly human-sized, with articulated joints, hands, feet, and magical eyes; or a stouter version made by the dwarves. These dwarflike gearforged are more common in the cantons of the Ironcrag than in the Free City of Zobeck but are accepted as receptacles for dwarf souls. In the South, minotaur gearforged are rare but not entirely unknown. A few gearforged are built in even smaller sizes, intended for kobold souls, but these are subject to frequent failure and even the extinction of the souls they carry.

### GEARFORGED CHARACTERS

All gearforged have the following racial traits.

**Medium:** As Medium creatures, gearforged have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.

Gearforged base land speed is 30 feet.

**Clockwork Construct Traits:** As constructs, gearforged possess no Constitution scores and are immune to disease, poison, magical sleep effects, enchantment effects, paralysis, and effects that require a Fortitude save (unless those effects can also affect objects). They cannot become fatigued or exhausted.

Gearforged do not need to eat, sleep, or breathe. As living creatures, though, they do not have any other immunities common to constructs.

Gearforged cannot heal damage on their own. Cure spells, wands, and potions heal gearforged for the minimum amount per charge or dose, and the psionic repair damage power works normally. The mending spell heals a gearforged for 1 point of damage, while the make whole spell heals 2d8 points of damage +1 per caster level (maximum +10).

Rather than sleep, gearforged must rewind their springs, repair gears, and oil and clean their parts each day for a 4-hour period to ensure normal functioning. They are fully aware during this period, but any interruption in their routine during these 4 hours requires them to start again from the beginning. Gearforged can function a number of days equal to their character level without performing this maintenance, but each day without such a repair period applies a cumulative –2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. If a gearforged neglects his repair period a number of days equal to his character level, he becomes immobile and helpless until repaired by someone else. One 4-hour repair period eliminates all accumulated penalties.

Gearforged gain a +2 racial bonus on Craft (clockwork) and Intimidate checks. Gearforged intimately understand how their own race works and can apply that knowledge elsewhere, while most living creatures find gearforged a little unsettling.

**Automatic Language:** Trade Tongue. **Bonus Languages:** Draconic and Dwarven.

**Favored Class:** Fighter.





All gearforged were once other creatures, now inhabiting standardized bodies with cylinders, springs, and articulated joints of varying quality. Each is made of iron, brass, and steel and as distinctive in appearance as other people differ by their hair and eyes. The gearforged are thinking creatures and can serve as city watchmen and soldiers. Gearforged have free will that separates them from other mechanical devices, which are no more than simple servants responsive to orders and capable of little more than a limited amount of memorization.

Gearforged mechanisms are more than mechanical, because all gearforged are machines with a soul. Their arms and legs depend on actuators powered by everwound springs. Their minds depend on memory gears, transverse cognition gearing, and the marvel of a soul gem connected directly to a maze of silver and mithral steam, spark, and magical conduits. These elements are all held in a shell of iron, brass, and steel, and the bulk of the things is remarkable. A large and heavily armored gearforged can weigh 400 pounds, since its armor is built in.

## Gearforged Components

The range of gearforged anatomy in all its variants is remarkable, but all gearforged share some common parts.

### Everwound Springs

These magical springs provide energy over long periods, effectively acting as the power sources for most of the gearforged's limbs and fingers. A broken everwound spring results in the loss of function in that digit or limb.

### Soul Gems

The mind of a gearforged creature is as sharp as that of any flesh-and-blood soul, but it is more portable. The animating, vital principle of a gearforged—its will, its personality, and its mind—are retained in one or (for an extra 8,000gp) two soul gems. These are the elements that retain an individual's spirit or soul, and their destruction means the death of that gearforged.

### Memory Gears

These are delicate constructions: scroll-like ribbons pierced with thousands of pin-sized holes, and others wound about with tiny enchantments of great complexity. The memory of a gearforged for all the days after its creation lives in the memory gears; older gearforged have many such gears, and the material component for the magic to create them requires one new gear/two levels attained or every 10 years of life. Installing one requires one day's work and 2,000 gp.

Memory gears can be taken from a dead gearforged and read by others. This is a lengthy process and viewed with some alarm by most gearforged, since it is akin to peering into the most private details of a creature's life.

Installing an existing, used memory gear in a new gearforged requires a new Ritual of Soulforging and at least one week for the recipient to remember and understand the results. The process is dangerous, requiring a Fortitude save (DC 10 + one-half level of dead gearforged + Cha modifier of dead gearforged) to succeed.

### RITUAL OF SOULFORGING

**School** necromancy; Effective Level 5th

**Skill Check** Craft (clockwork) DC 20, 4 successes; Knowledge (arcana) DC 20, 2 successes (Priests of Rava may substitute Knowledge (religion))

**Components** M, S, SC, V

**Material Components**—a complete mechanical body of actuators, springs, gears, and engraved gemstones (minimum cost 10,000 gp)

**Secondary Casters**—up to four additional casters are optional; each who makes a successful Knowledge (arcana) or Craft (clockwork) check (DC 20) adds +1 to the primary caster's check

**Casting Time** 60 min

**Range** touch

**Target** one humanoid creature

**Duration** permanent

**Saving Throw** Will negates Spell

**Resistance** yes

You and the subject chant and act in unison to trigger the soul's migration into the waiting deathless, tireless body of iron and brass. If the incantation succeeds, the subject's old body dies and the new clockwork body is animated with life. The subject is effectively reincarnated as a gearforged PC and continues adventuring in that form.

**Backlash:** Ghost or wraith. The unbound spirit attacks the primary caster three times as a ghost. A cleric turning the unbound soul can prevent the attacks during the soul transfer process.

**Failure:** After the first failed check, the subject's soul is removed from his or her body but not yet constrained in the new one. The soul attacks you as a wraith. If a second skill check fails, the incantation fails completely: you and any other casters suffer 3d8 damage (Fort DC 15 + your Int modifier) and the subject dies. If the save is successful, the subject is either imprisoned in a gem (as per *magic jar*, if a 500 gp or better gem was prepared in advance) or released to the world as a ghost or wraith.





## KAMMAE STRABOLI

The inquisitors of Kammae Straboli know when you are plotting a crime. The priests of the Moon Goddess know when you are seeking to leave town. The oracle herself knows her enemies' every plot, and yet Kammae Straboli is not the new imperial heart but a city-state struggling against problems of its own. Its people resent the oracle's dictates, however well meant. Its foes and rivals expend great effort to obscure their actions through magic; and just because Oracle Yeneva knows that Capleon will refuse to sell Kammae grain, she does not immediately have a new source of food for her people. Foresight has not guaranteed victory or contentment.

So the people of Kammae know much, and yet do not aspire to do much more than spread the word and grow slowly. The heady days after the chaining of Nethus, when divinely fired soldiers marched and conquered with a sense of certain victory, are gone. Kammae is a place of informers, suspicions, and strange pieties, where the anger of the sea lurks below the surface. It is the only one of the Seven Cities



### THEOCRACY OF KAMMAE STRABOLI

**Symbol:** Black field, a silver serpent below three golden moons, and above three golden oak leaves

**Ruler:** The Word of the Moon and Voice of Wisdom, Her Resplendence the Oracle Yeneva Podella (LE female human oracle 18)

**Important Personages:** Lygren Ullos, the Dark Eye of the Moon (LE male human inquisitor 14)

**Population:** 173,800 (154,000 humans, 12,000 minotaurs, 7,800 kobolds)

**Capital:** Kammae, population 37,900 (32,000 humans, 4,400 kobolds, 1,500 minotaurs)

**Major Cities:** Antiba, population 15,000; Lunnaum, population 6,100; Deapri, population 1,200

**Great Gods:** Hecate (patron), Charun, Lada, Ariadne (Rava), Volund

**Trade Goods:** Marble, statuary, wine, lumber, apples, hazelnuts, religious amulets, charms, icons, requiem (smuggled)



without a substantial navy. It is the most eldritch and peculiar as well, with an emphasis on displays of public piety, works of true charity, and great deeds of devotion.

## Kammae Straboli, City of the Oracle

The city is a fine sight of red tile roofs and whitewashed houses, all well kept, its people learned and pious. Kammae is the only place in the Seven Cities where Mavros is not one of the great gods, for Oracle Yeneva abhors war, and her goddess Hecate commands the oracle gain power in other ways than brute strength, fire, and mayhem. In many ways, Kammae is the perfect society, with little crime and a unified people. And yet it is not entirely happy.

### The Requiem Dens

One of the clearest reasons for Kammae's difficulties is that many of its novice priests and most devoted zealots give themselves over to requiem, using the drug to speak to the ghosts of elven wizards, dead

army officers, or any other spirit they can corral long enough for a few pointed questions. This practice provides Kammae with lore, secrets, and insights not available to rival cities, but it comes at the price of addiction, madness, and death. Visitors to Kammae are advised to avoid the requiem dens.

## Halls of the Oracle

The oracle's building adjoins the Great Gold and Silver Temple of the Three Goddesses: Hecate the Moon Goddess, and her sisters Rava the Weaver of Fate and Lada the Golden. The halls are gilded throughout the interior and lit by magical lights that dim only at the new moon. Its altars are redolent of fresh flowers in summer and rich incense and lavender in winter. The oracle holds oracular sessions for the three days of each full moon. Only the most favored heroes and wealthiest donors are guaranteed a hearing at these times. The oracle traditionally sits on the ivory stairs at the center of the temple when receiving visions.

## THE PRICE OF REQUIEM

Requiem is a powerful and addictive drug that allows users to speak with the dead. Made from the death's head mushrooms, requiem is a potent drug when smoked. It gives users visions of the dead but is highly addictive. It comes in two forms: a muddy form called Clay, and a refined version called Bliss.

### REQUIEM CLAY

**Type** poison (drug), inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 13

**Onset** 1 minute; **Frequency** —

**Addiction** Fortitude DC 13 + 1/question asked; **Withdrawal** cumulative –2 penalty to all saving throws, attacks, ability checks, and skill checks

**Effect** *speaking with dead*, nonlethal damage, see text; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

**Price** 750 gp

### DESCRIPTION

Made from death's head mushrooms and various other unsavory components, this potent and highly addictive euphoric drug gives users visions of the dead. (Unwilling users can make a DC 13 save to avoid effects.)

Upon smoking requiem clay, you summon the spirit of a single deceased person that you personally knew in life; you are granted the benefits of a *speaking with dead* spell and can ask 10 questions. The spirit's image is visible, and its voice can be heard in whispers, but it cannot touch you.

The spirit cannot refuse to answer your questions, but it might attempt to deceive using Bluff. The spirit receives a +3 bonus to any Bluff checks.

Afterward, you suffer 2 hp of nonlethal damage per question asked and must make a Fortitude save (DC 13 + 1/question asked) or become addicted to the drug. For each week that requiem clay is not smoked, you suffer a cumulative –2 penalty to all saving throws, attacks rolls, ability checks, and skill checks. Smoking either requiem bliss or requiem clay eliminates all accumulated penalties from abstaining. Breaking the addiction requires casting a *remove disease* or *heal* spell or abstaining for at least 2 weeks with a DC 20 Will save at the end of each week. Two consecutive successful saving throws are necessary to break the addiction through abstinence.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft (alchemy), cremated ashes of a sentient being, *speaking with dead*; **Cost** 375 gp

### REQUIEM BLISS

**Type** poison (drug), inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

**Onset** 1 minute; **Frequency** —

**Addiction** Fortitude DC 15 + 1/question asked; **Withdrawal** cumulative –3 penalty to all saving throws, attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks

**Effect** *speaking with dead*, *contact other plane*, nonlethal damage, see text; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

**Price** 4,500 gp

### DESCRIPTION

Made from death's head mushrooms and various other unsavory components, this potent and highly addictive euphoric drug gives users visions of the dead. (Unwilling users can make a DC 15 save to avoid effects.)

By smoking requiem bliss, you summon the spirit of a single deceased person whose name you know. The spirit takes on the physical characteristics it had in life and might touch you, though it cannot harm you.

You are granted the benefits of a *speaking with dead* spell (CL 10th), and the spirit cannot lie. Additionally, you are simultaneously granted the benefit of the *contact other plane* spell (Outer Plane, greater deity option), as the summoned spirit consults with others and relates information about a single question that would otherwise be unknown to it.

Afterward, you suffer 3 hp of nonlethal damage per question asked and must make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1/question asked) or become addicted to the drug. For each week that requiem bliss is not smoked, you suffer a cumulative –3 penalty to all saving throws, attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks. Smoking either requiem bliss or requiem clay eliminates all accumulated penalties from abstaining. Breaking the addiction requires casting a *remove disease* or *heal* spell or abstaining for at least 3 weeks with a DC 20 Will save at the end of each week. Three consecutive successful saving throws are necessary to break the addiction through abstinence.

### CONSTRUCTION

**Requirements** Craft (alchemy), cremated ashes of a sentient being, crushed pearl, *speaking with dead*, *contact other plane*; **Cost** 2,250 gp



## THE OUTCASTS

The original dwarves of Melana were monarchist outcasts from the democratic Free Cantons of the Ironcrag. Their descendants still cling to the older traditions of lost Nordheim and believe a dwarven king should rule the Ironcrag. This philosophy does not sit well with their free cousins, who view the Melana dwarves as a collection of lucid lunatics, at best. A few tradition-minded dwarves still find their way here from the Ironcrag every generation. Melana's warmest relations are with the cantons of Bareicks, Gunnacks, and Nordmansch.

## The Undercity

Underneath the paved streets of human Melana lie the tunnels and halls of the dwarves. Great mine shafts deep into the earth provide the city with iron, copper, coal, and more precious ores. In the years since the dwarves first arrived in Melana, they have expanded the Undercity into a maze of

workshops, forges, living quarters, and mines that extends for miles.

Estranged from their Ironcrag cousins, the dwarves of Melana value the contributions of every dwarf, both male and female, in any task where they showed skill. Thus, unlike some of the Free Cantons, the dwarves of Melana do not cloister their women. Female dwarves can take on any role they choose.

## The Kobold Warrens

The kobolds live in a series of warrens and natural caves discovered by dwarven miners during one of the initial expansions of the Undercity. The kobolds were quickly put to work digging in dangerous areas, mucking out privies, and hauling ore for the dwarves. Although not slaves, the kobolds are treated poorly by the dwarves, who see them as little more than animals.

The selection of Censor Vinzlo came as a complete surprise to the kobolds, since they had no idea a kobold could be censor. Indeed most did not even know an election was underway. Nevertheless, they are ecstatic to have a voice in the government, and their many petty kings and clan leaders are quickly moving to demand better things for their people.

## The Silver Crown Tavern

Deep in the bowels of the Undercity sits a tavern where no lamp has ever burned. Here dwarves refuse to strike a light, to create a place only for themselves where few humans dare visit. The Silver Crown Tavern is currently a place of grumbling discontent over the recent election and a center of active support for Seppo, the Master of Smiths, the "true censor." Some say he is more than that, but Seppo ignores the loose talk of his supposed royal lineage.

## The Dwarven King's Tomb

Hidden in the hills of central Melana is a tomb the dwarven monarchists claim holds the remains of Ruggeson the Golden, the dwarf who should have ruled all the Ironcrag. This tomb serves as a secret meeting place for the dwarven monarchists and is strewn with offerings of ale, ore, tin crowns, and even semi-precious stones.

The monarchists meet at each turn of the seasons to consult the spirits and plan for the revival of the dwarven monarchy. They claim Seppo is the rightful heir and support him as ruler of Melana, and hopefully someday all of the Ironcrag.

## Tolmezo and the Floating Roads

The decaying town of Tolmezo sits on the edge of the marshes south of Melana. Tolmezo is the first stop on the Floating Roads, a series of wooden causeways attached by steel rings to stone pillars sunk into the swamps. The causeways float and are passable from Tolmezo into Trombei and along Triolo's border in any season or weather. Or at least they used to be. The roads are rotting, in poor repair, and sometimes sink under heavy loads. Ropes and rings and planking that once lasted decades with little maintenance now decay within a year. The marshes have also become more dangerous. Lizardmen and even hydras live here and lately have become bolder in attacking even well-armed travelers.

A few Friulan scholar mages have recently arrived in Tolmezo at the request of the town's leader and Marsh Warden, Sabine Felderol. She wants to see the roads restored. If they decline further, she fears that Tolmezo will soon be abandoned.





## Other Sites

**Brescia, the Iron Redoubt:** At the base of the Ironcrags, the fortress city of Brescia sits astride the road to Melana like a high-walled tower. So it should: the dwarves built Brescia as a rearguard against raids from the Ironcrags. Its defenses include 2,000 dwarven infantry and crossbowmen ever alert for aggression from the Free Cantons. Brescia also controls Melana's richest iron veins and significant deposits of silver and semi-precious stones. These mines have attracted dwarven miners, and Brescia is growing quickly.

**Ferriero:** Primarily a trade town with a border castle to the south, Ferriero was once independent. Trade and customs provide much of its money, especially now that patrolling the road falls to (and is paid for by) Melana.

**Keep of Atranto:** The largest and richest mines of Melana lie within a day's march of this huge and heavily garrisoned keep.

**The Scarlet Citadel:** The castle of Gellert the Gruesome, a notorious warlock who retains a private army. He scrupulously swears fealty to the censors each year and defends the border against the creatures of the White Forest and the war wagons of the Magdar—though sometimes he fights for the Magdar King Stefanos as well, and his loyalty is suspect at best.

**Schio, Gate to the North:** At the confluence of the Revolo and Templine rivers, Schio directs a small but active waterborne trade. Smaller settlements and farms line these rivers, and ship food and simple crafts via barge through Schio out to Triolo and the Middle Sea. Just as important is the wagon trade north to the Magdar Kingdom and Zobeck.

**Spindletop:** Commanding the approaches to Verrayne, this castle also keeps a wary eye on the Ironcrags.

## Adventures in the Canton of Melana

Adventures in Melana involve the shifting social dynamic, the vital trade routes, and conflicts that change brings.

- Lizardmen contact representatives of Tolmezo, claiming to have found a fix for the Floating Roads in a strange fortress in the marshes. To avoid paying their price, Sabine hires the PCs to investigate.
- The PCs look for miners that vanished from some of the smaller mines under Brescia. They quickly find one of the dwarves in the wilderness, half starved and muttering over and over, "the whispers, stop the whispers."
- A Trombei merchant hires the PCs to make a discreet delivery to the kobold warrens. He repeatedly emphasizes that they should never open the iron chest under any circumstances.

# FRIULA, CITY OF SECRETS

The stone spires of Friula thrust skyward along the shore and cast their shadows over a massive barrier reef. In Old Verrayne, the wealthy and powerful luxuriated in private keeps along the golden coast, stretching from Friula to Capleon in the south. The great mystic orders built their monasteries on these quiet waters, undisturbed by imperial roads.

When the cataclysm destroyed Caelmarath and seven other magocracies, it also shattered the shores of the golden coast, and only Friula survived. Exiles and refugees poured into the damaged city and took up residence in ancient towers abandoned by the elves. Soon after, a few adventurous souls dared to explore the ruined coast, haunted keeps, and empty monasteries and bring their treasures back to Friula. Within a decade, Friula housed more books, scrolls, and records than anywhere outside of distant Allain and the Nurian temples of Thoth-Hermes.

Friula's wealth of knowledge has attracted scholars, arcanists, and secret-seekers from all corners, and with this success has come great suspicion from its neighbors. A city of exiles and refugees that invites Mharoti arcanists to trade tomes—and allows ships of the Magocracy of Allain safe harbor—cannot help but unnerve Verrayne and Trombei.

The city's small enclave of elfmarked scholars and even occasional Arbonesse elves is further "proof" of Friula's suspect reputation to other Septimes. These elves departed with the others but returned when the library was built. That they say nothing about the Retreat only deepens the distrust.

Fortunately for the city, an assault by land would require a march through difficult terrain and the surrounding basilisk-infested hills. Friula's allies and her enemies send spies more often than armies.

Today, Friula is a center of art and knowledge isolated from its neighbors. To maintain its independence, the small city must constantly balance the shifting political tides. Aside from lore, the



## FRIULA, CITY OF SECRETS

**Symbol:** Golden basilisk on a black field

**Rulers:** The Bibliotori

**Important Personages:** Bibliotor Uthan Bianco (CN male human wizard 3/expert 5); (LN female human rogue 13); Ulsavus Mentis, the Golden Voice (CG male human bard 12); Ferrywoman Sarda Leynar (N female human cleric 14 [Charun])

**Population:** 133,350 (130,000 humans, 3,000 dwarves, 300 gnomes, 50 elfmarked and elves)

**Capital:** Friula, population 15,000 (12,000 humans, 3,000 dwarves, 200 gnomes, 50 elfmarked and elves)

**Major Cities:** Feymott, population 13,000

**Great Gods:** Charun (patron), Hecate, Mavros, Sarastra, Thoth-Hermes

**Trade Goods:** Vellum, ink, smoked meat, gemstones, poison, scarlet dye

city has built a strong trade in vellum, rare inks, and other tools of the scholar's trade. Its reef provides an abundance of fish and the makings of valuable Friulan scarlet dye. Melana's mercenaries frequently take Friulan coin.

## Government: the Bibliotori

A closed cabal of collectors called the bibliotori rules Friula. They guard the city's repositories of books and scrolls, at the same time competing tirelessly to expand their own private collections. Entry into the cabal is by invitation and extended only to those who can add substantially to the members' collections.

No one knows the exact number of bibliotori, but currently 12 members openly administer Friula's government and act as diplomats. In addition to the powers of government, they work closely with rogues and various guilds to expand their collections and to spy on their enemies.