

## **The Arcanum**

Sometimes referred to as Warlocks, the devoted member of the Arcanum serve the purpose of protecting the Prime from invasion. Long ago when the Reality War broke through the barrier like water through a busted dam, those that would found the guild came together and combined their knowledge of the planes to restore the planer barrier and lock out the planes. While these not so humble beginnings are still a key factor in the orders mission statement, they have since grown to not only the study or but mastery of the powers of the Inner Plane.

Being that the Inner Plane is a massive landscape and the four elementals are constantly at war with each other for a larger control of the plane, there is always something to be studied. Not only is the energy of the plane studied and harnessed but also the order strives to understand how the plane works on a whole; perhaps if they can unlock the extent of the Inner Plane then other planes will be easier to master as well.

### ***A lecture hosted by Grandmaster Toth***

There was a time when history would tell you we lived in caves and drew stick figures on the walls to tell our stories, and that we were once the victim of the world around us and the elements that fill it. And often times that same history will lie to you and tell you that we grew and evolved from then to now that it was our natural course to become what we are today. I say these things are heresy, we may have been at one time as simple as children but it was not some blind chance that we became more. And I fail to believe that we were victims, we may have been blind and too dull to see the truth, but we are those that weathered through. Inside us stirs the power of the inner planes that give this world shape and feature; and like most of you in this class I too was once trapped inside the shell unable to know the real world. That time has passed and if you are here then you to know that the shell can be broken and that inner power can be unlocked and harnessed. The elements are not the masters we are, they are nothing more than a weapon ready to be grasped and bent to our will. Your journey will not be easy, and I assure you many of you will fail; as while you may have the power inside you, you will be too weak to master it. But for those who dig, deal, and push with every fiber of their being true power will be yours.

Now before you bother me with incessant questions I will quell the important ones. I cannot count how many naysayers I have heard over the years, "Oh doesn't that kind of power corrupt?"; of course it does it corrupts, you simpleton, those weak of mind and will who dabble with things far greater than they will always become its servant. "Is it not dangerous to channel such power from the planes into our world" again for the simple minded the thought that the sun comes up and down is also scary; yes with any weapon

comes a certain amount of danger but we are not children running around with sharp knives. We are what is next, we are the chosen and the few who have been awakened and given the sight to understand our place in this world.

The origins of the Arcanum, much like most of history, are often interpreted incorrectly or are assumed. To believe as those outside these walls do, would be a fool's errand, they are wrong. They would have you believe that we are just warlocks looking to serve some master, fools all of them so simple minded that they do not understand the power we have tapped into. From the far corners of the planes we have gathered the knowledge from the ancient times; we have unlocked the truths that have so long been forgotten. Becoming one of the Arcanum will be no easy task as those who have proven themselves to be worthy will push you to your limits weeding out the weak and easily swayed. Realize that to master the elemental forces of the planes you must be unwavering in yourself and in your skill, or they will crush you like a bug or worse overtake you like a hand into a glove making you a puppet.

### ***War of the Ridamar***

There was a time when the elements waged wars of uncontrolled destruction everywhere they could find, for as long as time has existed they have battled for dominance. It would not be until the third age of mortals when their war would pour over the barriers and spill into our world. Unlike the planes this world is a very delicate thing, and their war brought destruction like none had seen before. The earth opened and swallowed up thousands, the oceans swelled and swept away entire coasts, fire reigned from the skies, and the wind stripped leaves, bark, and flesh from all it touched. The reign of mortals seemed doomed, as the world began to buckle and fold under the pressure. While there are more names that time has forgotten there are 4 that lead the cause to save this world from the destruction of the planes. Four powerful warlocks, each touched by the planes and masters of the four powers. They lead those who would become the Arcanum to a long forgotten ruined city from ages past, The Ridamar. In a prior age it was said the city was a powerful location for magic, and that a war at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> age had left it in ruins. There in the ruins of The Ridamar they found the key to the past and the salvation to the future; a ley line obelisk, still intact. The 4 leaders formed an alliance and began to pool their powers into the obelisk forming a Mana Well, an extremely powerful and ancient kind of magic. And so the order was formed. They pulled the elemental forces they controlled into new buildings, to fortify the old ruins, to prepare for the waves of elementals that would soon be at their doorstep by drawing by the power of the well.

It would take only a few months for the well to become strong enough to complete the task of pushing out the elementals from this plane and resealing the barrier. As the Well grew in power so did the elementals assault on the city, after only a few weeks the war was

upon them full force. Alone the warlocks would have stood little chance against the fury of all four planes at once, but with the power of the Well and their combined control of the elements they were able to combine their forces into meta-elements. Unlocking the true power of planar magic gave the order its power source that would define its place in the world. In the final days of the assault on The Ridamar the battle became so violent that the land stretching for one mile from the city was destroyed and twisted so badly that it became near impassable. The earth became jagged and twisted spines of obsidian. Once the Well was fully charged the order unleashed a pulse of magic that banished all of the elementals from the prime, and sealed the planar barrier.

### *Vollios*

While some has been covered about the Ridimar, little to none has been spoken of the land we sit upon. As one of your first steps in the induction process you will be sent into the wastelands beyond the Obsidian fields, and there you will see nothing. In sixteen thousand years not a single bit of life has grown on this continent, and for good reason. You see there was a time when landscape of Vollios was nothing less than breath taking, the hills and valleys were covered in the lushest bluegrass; something you can no longer find in our world. There were forests that towered into the skies and the land was full of cities and people. But all that changed, not over night but faster than one might be able to imagine; you see far to the west there is a valley and in that valley is the only other building on this shithole of a land mass. It is known as The Last Bastion of the Light, is an outpost well more just a manned memorial for all those that died. You see that building is on the same site as where the Black Gates opened and the hordes of Acheron spilled forth into our world.

War is not an easy thing, when it is in another land and it is not the lives of your loved ones and you home that is on the brink of destruction it is easy to cast judgment on actions a man might take. But you see when it is your home and your loved ones, ask yourselves is there anything you would not do to safeguard them? Furthermore when your enemy has nothing to lose, feels no remorse, and is nothing more than a creature summoned up from the plane and being driven blindly by a distance master, where do you draw the line. You see it was not in the early days of war but in time man became weak, we grasped at anything we could get our hands on to not be snuffed out. Well I will be the first to tell you, no great victory comes without some kind of sacrifice. There are none alive that can tell you for sure where it came from or what ran through the minds of those living in that time; but, what is known is that in those dark days we learned of the power of the Ley. You see Ley energy is something that not a lot of people understand even in the halls of the great Arcanum it is not a topic that is overly studied. Since it is tied to the prime and the

essence and seems to have little to no connection to the planes beyond, it has simply fallen to the wayside and maybe that is for the best.

As I said no one can tell where the knowledge came from but it fell into the right hands, and it would only be a matter of time until those hands became the unmaking of Vollios. They tapped into the raw power of the Ley Lines and using an ancient form of Glyph Magic, channeled the power as a weapon that by all counts evened the battle field. But fighting fire with fire means a lot of something has to get burned, well as I am sure many of you know Ley energy can get dangerous in large quantities, well they went a dash over the safe line. The weapon helped to push back the elementals and the deathless of Acheron, but with every passing day the energy soaked into the land. By the time the war ended it is said that the population of Vollios had dwindled from the tens of millions to mere tens of thousands. And in time they would be forced away, as we won we also blighted the land; our victory had come but we sealed our own fates. At one time the land was so radiated with Ley energy you could not even leave the Ridimar's protection, or the power would eat you alive. Over the years there were always stories from time to time of some wiseass thinking he could master it and trekking to the edge of the obsidian field only to be wholly consumed upon entering the wastelands. But there is a few of those that tell a different tale but that is for a different time.