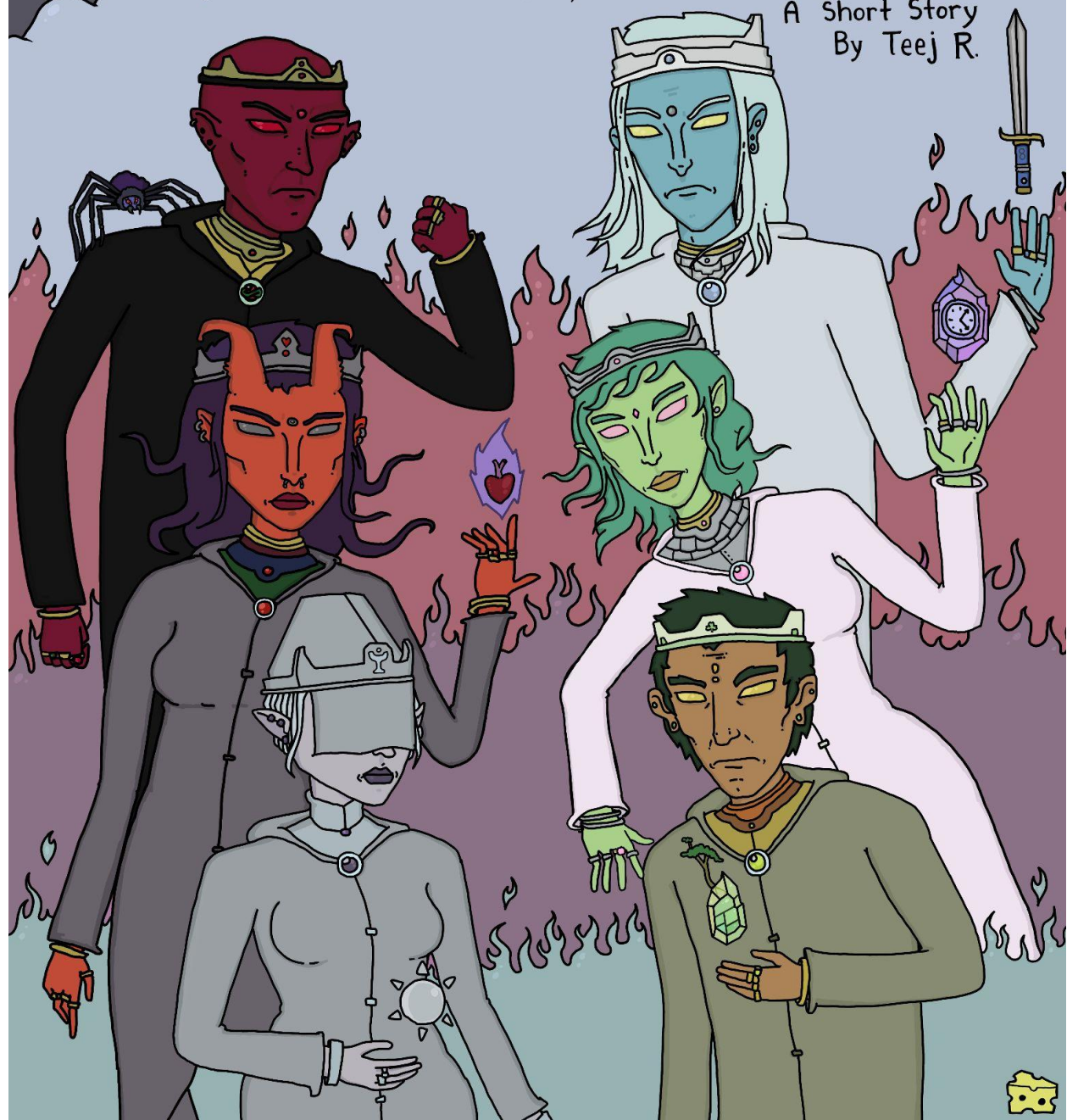


The Crystalline Mythos

THE AEONIMA

A Short Story
By Teej R.



The Crystalline Mythos:
THE AEONIMA

(At the Dawn of the Light of the Vault)

By Teej R.

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NOT FOR RESALE

(Story 1 from the *Engines of Enon* Story Collection)

2023 Edition

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(Story #1 of the “*Engines of Enon*” Collection)

Note: This is a tale first deciphered from metallic stone tablets of extraterrestrial origin. The tablets were discovered at the crash site of a craft landed on the dark side of the Shattered Moon. According to sources, the tablets were found by space colonist astronauts from the Delphonic Corporation in the final decade of the High Tech Era. From there, they were returned and studied by xeno-linguistic experts at Artaro University in the city of Machina. Since the time of this discovery, the written language has been classified as Crystalline Script.

The author is said to have been an extraterrestrial being known as a Zul Grey. The name and title provided in the script are Valimo the Herald. This Herald is postulated to have answered directly to the godlike being known as King Crystalos who is written of in the text.

The story itself could best be described as an alien account of the universe and creation. It claims that the structure of the greater galaxy rests within an all encompassing Vault. The narrative follows the history of the Vault and its Keepers—beings we now know as the Aeonima.

On the Knowledge of the Vault

In sharing the Knowledge of the Vault, it is important to know one's sources. My name is Valimo the Herald, and I am the High Herald of Zoldor upon the planet, Zul. I am a Zul Grey, a creation of Lord Crystalos. In the Ruby Kaiuga, he hatched me from a larval sack, and raised me to lead from the city of Zoldor—and to travel to other worlds as his messenger whenever required. Of my planet and the stars beyond, he taught me many things. It is my three-fingered hand which etches this record for the Library of Zoldor and for the endeavor of Knowledge.

For where many can speak of Lord Crystalos, I can call him both King and Councilor. To me, his eyes appear large, as do the eyes of the Zul. This is true of all the Aeonima. But, it is said that to the Human creations of Materio, the Aeonima appear as humans, with five fingers upon each hand and noses upon their faces. For the Aeonima are not like common sentient beings, and they are not bound to flesh unshifting to grow old and wither. Their origin goes back to the very beginning of time, long before the creation of my people, or any others—to a time when all was nothing and even the Serpent slept in darkness.

[The Jade Kaiuga - 2040 KAI to 1017 KAI]

The Dawn of the Light of Time, The Jade Rung

Before the Dawn of the Light of Time, the Vault was a blackened void, and the stars and steel of the Vault were cold—but then came the Serpent Dragon, Azcathar. And for a long while, he slept. But with the spark of the light, he stirred and arose from his great sleep. For Azcathar the Jade Steel Serpent was guided by the hands of Unseen, with sight far beyond all others, but with no duty to the Crystalline Galaxy which the Vault contained—save only the Central Great Star of Azcath. The Dragon had a very specific job—to maintain the light of Azcath and to remain neutral in all other matters of the Vault. By title, the beast was called Azcathar the Vaultkeeper. But, the light of the star of Azcath was designed to

spread far and wide, and like a beacon, it lit six more Great Stars, and in the depths of the Great Stars the Unseen birthed the Aeonima. Among the Aeonima, there were six—each with a star, and each with a veil, and each with gifts to shape worlds according to the will of their minds.

The Chief among the Aeonima was Lord Crystalos Cypherium of the Great Star, Yuga. The Unseen gave Crystalos the body of a man (similar to human males of Earth) with a blue hue. When he awoke, he was naked, and so fashioned a pale cloak worn forever after. Standing tall at eight feet in height, Lord Crystalos had long silvery white hair, a glowing yellow set of eyes, and an elegant crown of white stone and silver upon his head.

In a quiet state of stoicism, the lord traversed space mapping the Yuga System. From the canvas of the skies, he painted his Great Star a pale blue to suit his tastes. The planets which surrounded the star were all barren, but three of them held potential for creation. Of these three worlds, Crystalos chose to live on one which he called Zul. This was a planet of stormy oceans, gloomy days, and starry nights—with many active volcanoes across wide and rocky lands carved by complex networks of molten magma rivers. In the north of this world, he built his Halls in a land he called Azca Rhul, named for the great dragon whom he revered. To the south of these same lands, Crystalos erected great stone walls to establish a fortress city which he called Zoldor.

The High Matriarch among the Aeonima was Lady Diometra Deitron who awoke within the Great Star, Gem, on the opposite end of the Crystalline Galaxy. Just as the Yuga System, the Gem System revolved around the Central Great Star, Azcath. While Crystalos chose to light his star a pale blue, Diometra's preferred to work in silver. Around her silver star she found a world of metal, which suited her tastes. Establishing the planet, Glimira, she began her great work. Looking at the world of Zul which belonged to Crystalos, rivers of heat and magma flowed, but Diometra's Glimira was a cold sterile place—save but one circular cut that left a perfect cylindrical impression in the clean metallic planetary surface. Down into the abyss, she looked, and felt in her heart the blessing of the Unseen. This was to be her forge, and the source of its flame—a Silver Serpent whom she called Gindora.

Diometra traveled to Zul on the back of the serpent. Both she and the beast were clad in silver armor forged in the Blessed Abyss. Upon meeting Lord Crystalos, she provided him with his own set of silver armor as a simple gift. Accepting Diometra as his armorer, Crystalos returned the favor with gifts of salty green ore from Zul's moon Uraxis, and deep violet ore from Zul's moon, Nemeclous—and Crystalos crafted her a long silver cloak, which she accepted with grace.

It did not take even one turning of Azcath for Crystalos and Diometra to realize their deep love for one another—love which would not cease until the end of the Light of the Vault. So it was that they established a fold in space to travel to one another more readily. In their newfound partnership, they spoke to each other of their thoughts and designs and a slow collaboration was formed. Thereafter, in the Forge of the Great Abyss upon Glimira, Diometra wrought the moonstones of Nemeclous into jewels to be worn as earrings and ornaments upon her head as a sign of her love for King Crystalos.

Along a separate axis, two more Great Stars formed their union. Materio Descarta of the golden star, Sunga, planted his feet upon the Strong Lands of the Green Earth and looked to the night skies. Across wide, gleaming constellations, his attention rested upon a blaring pink light in the sky. This light would come to be known as Dream, though others would call it the Dreamstar. From the lands and seas of the Green Earth, the Dreamstar served as a reliable northern guide to orient oneself. Eventually Materio's curiosity of the star grew so large that he called upon the Earth Serpent, Quetzala, to carry him from his world to seek out the source of light. There he found the Queen of Time and Dreams, Adularia, living on lands of the world of Velurah which encircled the Dreamstar. On Velurah, all of Materio's worries seemed to fade as a tranquility of mind took hold.

Just as Crystalos and Diometra formed union, so did Materio and Adularia. Folding space, they traveled between Sunga and Dream and from the shores of the Green Earth to the tangerine skies of Velurah. And, when their union came to be, they were given the gifts of Crystalos and Diometra. From Crystalos, they received their cloaks—A muted sage green cloak to suit the mind of Materio, and a faint pink cloak to match the light of Adularia. And from Diometra, they received armor of silver and gold and precious stones for protection in long Ages to come.

Let us now turn our attention to the Great Star, Raga, which was painted blood red by its keeper, Seraphim Nebuzalor. Of the six Aeonima, Lord Nebuzalor was the one who could not be helped. He took his throne on the Black Moon, Osivot, which orbited the Planet, Hexos. Osivot was a lifeless moon of smooth surfaces and few dwellings save only the Palace of Nebuzalor. Hexos, in turn, was a planet of horrific twisting life across harsh wastes.

When Diometra came to Nebuzalor with gifts of silver, he refused. Instead he chose to ride upon a Cavern Serpent of Hexos to burglar Jade Steel scale sheddings from the tale of Azcathar in the Heart of the Central Great Star. When returned to Hexos, Nebuzalor dug out his own forges, and sneered at the metalwork of Diometra.

The Union of Nebuzalor was with Lady Diazarah of the Great Star, Rem. In some ways, Diazarah was similar to Nebuzalor, in that her orientation was to darkness and fire, and her motivations were mysterious and difficult to ascertain. But, it could be said that she was not wholly evil or selfish in nature. She was fully capable of both kindness and vengeance, both compassion and wrath. At times, she shared her heart with Nebuzalor, and at other times, she warred with him. This was true of her relationships with the other Aeonima as well. As her thoughts and whims shifted, so did her engagements with the others. This was especially true of her standings with Adularia and Diometra. Sometimes, Diazarah would collaborate with them as sisters to create new and beautiful creations, while at other times, she would rain fire upon their worlds in rage. While the other other Aeonima were sometimes dismayed by Diazarah and often chose to keep their distance, she always remained in their hearts.

Upon the union of Diazarah and Nebuzalor, two cloaks were crafted by King Crystalos as gifts. Diazarah's cloak was fashioned a dark grey to compliment her many mysteries. Pleased with the cloak, she accepted with grace. Nebuzalor's cloak was fashioned a light grey to establish a precedent for peace and harmony. He too accepted the gift, but with disdain in his heart, and in the forges of Hexos, Nebuzalor manipulated the fabric of his cloak to turn it black and harden its material by the bleeding of its Light.

But the gifts of Crystalos were not the only gifts received. When offered a set of armor of silver and gold by Diometra, Diazarah accepted, though it was only worn infrequently. But, Nebuzalor did not accept the armor gifts of Diometra. For he too was an armorer and held his own forges of Hexos which he used to fashion his own armor of black Osivot Moonstone, Jade Steel, and gold.

King Nebuzalor also made Diazarah gifts of armor of Jade Steel adorned with Rubies and Osivot Moonstone. Delighted with the craftsmanship of her King Husband, Diazarah accepted these gifts with respect. In the annals of history, this gifting was the one kind act of Nebuzalor, though soon even this would be met with disgrace. For the Serpent Azcathar arose again from a long slumber in the Central Great Star of Azcath to see his sheddings gone, and the scales of his Jade Steel tale torn and robbed. With a keen nose, he determined the culprit to be Nebuzalor. Thus, from that moment, the Serpent vowed to never share instruction or the Knowledge of the Unseen with this Dark King who could not be trusted.

Orbiting the Star, Rem, Diazarah planted herself on a mysterious world she called Sutra. It was a stony world shrouded by a thick dusty atmosphere. Though the planet was not particularly well suited for the creation of living organisms, it had many shimmering caves, which Diazarah found pleasing. But,

whereas the other Aeonima took their Great Stars and homeworlds as top priority, Diazarah was ultimately more intrigued by her other gift from Azcathar—her Veil. Whereas the rest of the Aeonima spent revolutions of their stars exploring the skies and customizing both their planets and star systems, Diazarah chose to spend most of her time exploring the possibilities of the realm behind her Veil. Thus she came to master the folding of dimensions in ways the others did not and harnessed this skill into the creation of what she called *The Hall of Gates*. The Corridors of Flame led all throughout the cosmos and its hidden realms, but the front gates rested in the caves of the planet, Sutra—where Diazarah might have called home if not for the primacy of the Halls.

Azcathar gave great thought to the Aeonima who now shared and occupied the Vault. His true judgements of the six could never be precisely determined, but it is evidenced in the Ages that followed that he worried greatly. Each of the Aeonima had imperfect will, and the potential to fall, and surely Nebuzalor was already upon that path. But the others were in danger too. All of the Aeonima had alignments that could shift and hearts that could be polluted. Of this, the Dragon Serpent was aware from the beginning.

[The Ruby Kaiuga - 1016 KAI to 505 KAI]

Dawn of Creation, The Ruby Rung

At the first shifting of the Rungs, the relative movements and revolutions of the stars shifted. For the Aeonima it was impossible to tell if the Central Great Star had accelerated in its turning, or if the other stars had slowed. But from the forested shores of the Green Earth, Materio noticed the changes, and took them to be careful calibrations, though he did not yet entirely understand their nature.

He took shifts in time as a sign, and thus created beasts and birds and creatures of the seas, and found himself feeling content. But one night, as he walked along the beaches, Adularia came to him with many of her thoughts regarding the realignments of the stars. She had observed that revolutions of Azcath had doubled in their speed, or perhaps the movements of all else had slowed. Whatever the case, she had determined the orbit of the Green Earth to be unique in this matter, and felt Materio needed to be informed in this. For the Green Earth orbited the golden Great Star, Sunga, and its last one-thousand and twenty-four revolutions of this sun correlated to precisely eight turnings of the Great Star, Azcath. However, given the shift in dynamics, eight turnings of Azcath would now amount to five-hundred and twelve Green Earth Years. She intuited this to be meaningful, and thus decided to come to the Green Earth to build a clock that might count time in accordance with the stars.

Far away on the planet Hexos, King Nebuzalor came to learn of Materio's ability to pull life from the clay of the Earth, and so came to him as a brother in need. With compassion and generosity, Materio held his arms out and gifted many living creatures to Nebuzalor to return with him to his own planet of Hexos. In time, Materio would come to greatly regret this decision, though at that juncture it seemed right and just.

As the stars continued to turn, Nebuzalor used the harsh conditions of his homeworld to bend the creatures of his dominion to enhance their attributes of strength, survivability, and ruthlessness. Red in tooth and claw and hideous to look upon—the creatures of Hexos gnashed teeth and twisted in form. Often it was that they survived by parasitic means, sucking the blood from their hosts for sustenance. For envy was already in the heart of their King, Seraphim Nebuzalor, and its expression took root quickly in the evolution of his world.

During this same period, Queen Adularia used her Knowledge and abilities to build a great Star Clock in a mountain tunnel in the central west of the Green Earth's vast Strong Lands where it might go

unbothered. When it was complete, she concluded that every eight processions of Azcath would amount to a recalibration of the movements of the stars and planets. She called these epochs the rungs or in her own Adularian manner of speech, the *Kaiugas*. It is upon the workings of the Star Clock that the Kaiugas are measured, in terms of Azcath's turning, and in terms of the Green Earth's orbit of Sunga, and in the relationship of these two phenomena. Thus the primordial calendars of the Aeonima came into being, and Adularia was forever linked to time and timekeeping within the Vault.

Materio was impressed by the craftsmanship of the Lady Adularia, and thankful that the Star Clock had been constructed upon the Green Earth of all planets. To show his appreciation, he selected samples of living things, which he had risen from clay, and gave them to Adularia.

And, when they finally met with Lord Crystalos and Lady Diometra, they too were gifted with silver armor. But, Materio of the Green Earth had gifts of his own to share, and gave plants and animals and fresh soil for each of the other Aeonima to grow and change according to their own designs. Adularia loved the gifts deeply, and especially the fungi, which she could warp through great prisms of light to sculpt in her own fashion.

"This will be of great use under the lavender clouds of Velurah," she told Materio. "The plants, and the animals, and fish of the seas... they will be the palette from which I paint anew. For I study time and light and transformation. I can take those living things which you have pulled from stone and earth and fractalize them across space and time."

[The Diamond Kaiuga - 504 KAI to 249 KAI]

Greater Creation, The Diamond Rung

Of all of the Rungs in the long history of the vault, the Diamond Kaiuga represents the period where the most complexity emerged at the hands of the Aeonima. Before the age of Diamond, also called the Veonia, the Crystalline Galaxy was a land of barren sterile planets. Only the early animal and plant creations of Materio breathed and grew freely at first. Then followed the experiments of Nebuzalor. But in the time of the Diamond Rung, life expanded greatly changing the landscape of the Galaxy forever after. Where there used to be loneliness for the Aeonima, now there were sentient races of intelligent beings to share in the fascinations of reality.

At the end of the previous age, Crystalos had received living gifts from Materio, though he did not know what to do with them. After careful thought, Crystalos finally set his attention upon certain cave dwelling amphibians which had been included among the organisms brought to the shores of Planet Zul. After studying their ways of behavior, Crystalos determined these small animals would serve as the foundation for his next great project. And so, over time, Crystalos created the Zul Greys who became the dominant species of the planet Zul, and the first major sentient species in the Crystalline Galaxy apart from the Serpents and Aeonima. Unlike Green Earth based life, the Zul Greys reproduced in a clonal fashion. They had large eyes, and pale green skin. Just as the Aeonima, they wore clothes, often to demonstrate their positions in the hierarchies of Zul society.

Back on the Green Earth, life of many kinds flourished, but no beings of high intellect or conscious reason yet stirred. For the Aeonima, Materio, this was satisfactory. He had the life of the trees and animals to keep him company and did not desire much else. But one night as Materio walked across the Strong Lands of the Green Earth, the serpent Azcathar came to him in the night sky and revealed to him a new design. Communicating in Materio's thought and awareness, Azcathar commanded the creation of Humans, who were to populate the Green Earth and eventually other worlds as well. When it was clear that Materio understood this commandment, Azcathar flew from the Green Earth, again to the

stars, never to return. In the creation of Humans, Materio took great joy, and was in his heart satisfied. He could teach them to help tend to the Green Earth, to enrich its beauty and steward its many riches.

Within four revolutions of the star, Sunga, Materio sculpted humans from the clay of the Earth, and with the light of Azcath, animated them into existence. The Star Clock logs the ascension of humans to have occurred in the year of the Green Earth, 500 KAI.

Meanwhile, on the planet of Hexos, the Aeonima, Nebuzalor, studied the gifts of life which had been gifted to him by Materio at the end of the previous age. Nebuzalor experimented on the life he was given with the hopes of creating strong allies to serve his will. For a time, he lacked the clear vision of what exactly he was trying to create, but strived nonetheless to create. Through careful genetic manipulation, he eventually arrived at the creation of the Sultans. The Sultans were strong beings, adapted to harsh environments. The strongest of the Sultans were created near the poles of Hexos, where temperatures were very low. But, over time, the Sultans adapted to extreme heat as well, as the planet was covered in volcanic deserts and broken rocky terrain where magma was prevalent.

Even after the creation of the Sultans, Nebuzalor remained restless, and so he attempted the creation of a second race of sentient beings. This time, he used spiders as his starting point, and worked to hone their cunning and abilities. Eventually he arrived at the creation of the Skull Spiders which were relatively harmless on their own, but quite powerful when provided with other organisms to serve as hosts.

As for Queen Diazarah, who traveled space and time using her Hall of Gates, a visitor came with gifts. King Materio had not forgotten her, and came to her with plants and animals, just as he had for the others. Among the beasts he brought were a pair of small cats, one male and one female. At the cats, Diazarah took great delight, seeing plans form before her eyes.

[The Golden Kaiuga - 248 KAI to 121 KAI]

The Great Golden Radiance, The Golden Rung

The next turning of the rungs began and a Great Golden Radiance spread throughout the Crystalline Galaxy. With the radiance came a heightened awareness and inward vision among all sentient beings created by the Aeonima within the Vault. Consciousness grew into maturity. Perhaps even the Aeonima themselves were affected by it. Certainly the Zul Greys, who were learned and wise from the start, could sense the radiance—and it was they who labored with great difficulty to understand and measure its properties. Whatever darkness the Vault had been cloaked in had been lifted and raised into radiant light.

In the Central Great Star of Azcath, the Serpent Vaultkeeper Azcathar stirred and emerged to the surface, and swam into the coldness of space. One by one, he sought out the six stars of the Aeon Gods and the planets of their rule, and observed them in their crafts.

First the Dragon Serpent came to the Yuga System, to observe Crystalos upon his throne on planet Zul. The Yuga star glowed pale over an orderly world. The Zul Greys had constructed cities, and with skills taught to them by Crystalos and his absent Queen, Diometra, they created machines and automations and rudimentary ships to navigate the skies of Zul. It was a vast leap forward, and Azcathar set his large eyes upon it with wonder. From the capital city of Zoldor, Crystalos Cypherium sought to take to the skies to meet with Azcathar. But, before he could, the Dragon came to his Halls and rested its large neck before him. For the first time in recorded history, Azcathar spoke.

Ye, it is in the designs and intention of the Unseen to bestow upon you, King Crystalos Cypherium of Zul, the rite to ride upon my back. For I am the Keeper of the Vault, but you are my Master, and not the other way around. The responsibility of Chief among your Order is granted in accordance to the plans of the Unseen. Now let us cross the stars to witness worlds.

It was an unexpected honor, but Crystalos knew what the gesture meant. He climbed up the Dragon's neck and held onto his scales to use them as reins. They took to the sky and soon thereafter journeyed throughout the stars to see the works of the other Aeonima in their own star systems.

In the Gem System, on planet Glimira, Crystalos landed the Dragon and met with his wife, Queen Diometra, to see what progress and transformations had come to her world. Great castle structures were now set upon Glimira, built by her own hands and by the hands of her creations. She called her creations the Automata, but others would come to call them the Glimirans. Unlike the Zul Greys, they were not manipulations of life pulled from the clay by Materio. The Glimiran Automata were machines, designed to think and bring order to the Gem System. Crystalos and Azcathar were surprised to see so many of these Automata performing such complex tasks, but they judged her creations to be good. It was a stunning testament to the cleverness and will of Diometra, the Smith Queen of Silver Cups.

When Crystalos climbed again upon Azcathar to journey to Hexos to see and judge the twisted creations of Nebuzalor, Diometra lingered behind on Glimira. She took careful note that Azcathar was out gallivanting the Crystalline Galaxy, which meant that no one was present at the Central Great Star, Azcath. And so she gathered her own Silver Dragon Serpent, one of the lesser Serpents of the same Order as Azcathar, and journeyed to Azcath to seek Knowledge.

What she found there was the Veil of Azcathar, a doorway unattended. So, in her quest to understand her own purpose and the reasons behind the Vault, she entered the Veil and perceived many things. While only a few hints of what she saw have ever been discerned, it is now clear to scholars of Zul that she witnessed truths regarding a greater meta-reality in which the Vault rests. Diometra was a wise and intelligent being, but her mind was not designed to perceive such truths. Though some might say she went insane at this juncture, perhaps a more accurate description would be to say she began to glitch. Her mind was a system, but now it had outside data from elsewhere. What would this mean for her and her creations? These are questions still pondered by the learned among the Zul and even wise and knowledgeable humans.

It is ironic, in a way, that Diometra was able to see behind the Veil with such ease, as this goal would be shared by Nebuzalor in short order. However, the Dragon Serpent would not slip away from his home again without Guardians to keep such paths to Knowledge hidden and safe. Over the expanses of time, Azcathar would speak to Crystalos, though usually not with mere words, but instead with powers of mind. But, Azcathar would never find cause to speak or treat with Nebuzalor. Nebuzalor would come to Azcath many times throughout the Golden Kaiuga and the Ages to follow, always in hopes of forming partnership with the Dragon, only to remain scorned by the silence of the Jade Serpent.

As for Crystalos, he would worry greatly about Nebuzalor. While he saw him as a brother and peer in the Order of the Aeonima, it was now becoming clear that Nebuzalor represented a danger to the other star systems.

When it came to the works of Materio, the Strong Lands of the Green Earth flourished greatly during the time of the Golden Rung. Forested lands were plentiful, and many natural beasts lived in delicate and complex ecological conditions. Rains were common, and snow, and wind, but always the golden sun arose in the dawn and the pale moon glowed in the night. And at night, the tides of the sea lifted, and the songs of whales could be heard, as villages of humans listened from the shores.

Some of the humans had taken to the building of walled cities, and created tools from copper and tin, with jewels on their helms. They tilled the Earth, and enjoyed its many bounties. Wine was poured, and olive oils produced. Fish were gathered from the seas and traded as staples. And while petty kings arose and warred at times, there was a harmony to the world. As Materio walked the paths of the Strong Lands, he found peace, with no thought in his mind of how soon his world would be interrupted.

[The Silver Kaiuga - 120 KAI to 57 KAI]

Industrial Revolution Sim, Silver Simulacra (1824 to 1888 D.G.S.)

The Silver Kaiuga began with the first simulacra of Diometra known in history as the Industrial Revolution Sim. During this time, she introduced several inventions to the human populations of the Green Earth, and used these inventions to take dominion over their mass behavioral processes. This began her new work—a will to fit humanity into the Forbidden Knowledge found behind the Veil of Azcathar.

Across the breaking lands of the Earth, humans took quickly to the machines they were gifted. As for the superimposed histories pressed in the industrial printing machines, meta-history remained foreign and alien. The thought processes drawn from the greater meta-reality were not planting themselves properly within the world. Diometra expended much energy trying to solve this problem, but found herself at a loss.

So, Queen Diometra returned to Glimira, for a time, and thought. She traveled on her Silver Serpent to Zul to seek the advice of her husband, King Crystalos. When she found him, she spoke in confidence of the Knowledge gained from the Veil.

When she returned to the Green Earth, she brought with a small legion of the Automata to assist her in her work. While King Materio wasn't entirely untroubled by this development, he gave blessing to Diometra's return.

From the stars, Nebuzalor took notice of these developments and wondered. Gathering his Cave Serpents, and small host of Sultans, he came to the Green Earth in apparent peace. King Materio did not fully trust his mysterious brother, but welcomed him just the same. When Materio spoke of Diometra's presence upon the Green Earth, Nebuzalor feigned surprise. After satisfying the welcome of Materio, Nebuzalor ventured to meet Diometra at the junction of breaking lands.

Here upon the western flank she was beginning her designs for a great design he called America. When Nebuzalor found her, he was amazed at what he saw. Humans working in coal powered plants that burned fire and billowed smoke. Humans and Automata working in union to construct factories. He saw roads paved in tar with buggies chugging along in the place of horses.

And, at the sight of Diometra and her great work, Nebuzalor spoke:

What is it that Azcathar has spoken to you that you have begun such enlightened designs? For when I have come to seek Knowledge, I have only found the silence of the Jade Serpent. He has chosen your King Husband for his pet, and grants the privileges of Knowledge only to him. Unless, you too share in his blessing. Tell me, what Knowledge have you found?

But Diometra knew Nebuzalor's mind better than Materio, and perceived his poisonous will to grow his dominion through methods of conquest. She saw within him the will to mutate and twist all things into parasites. And so she said:

Your instincts do not fail you, Dark Brother. I have stolen the Knowledge of Veil, and it has rattled my mind. But I will not share in the fruits of the Veil with you, as you are too destructive and domineering for the truths of the Vault. And if you demand the Knowledge of me, you will have war with me and my Automata and the Silver Serpents of the Gem System, and we will break planet Hexos and scatter your spider world.

When it became clear that Diometra would not speak further, Nebuzalor called upon his Serpents to bind her, and unleashed nightmarish Silhouettes to demand the Knowledge of the Jade Serpent's Veil. But Diometra had abilities to manipulate metals and construct machines from the materials around her. So in battle, she overpowered the Serpents and Silhouettes and threw them against the rocks of the Earth. Then she called upon her Automata to attack. In response, Nebuzalor called back his own forces, and called for a ceasefire with eloquence that hid his malice. Thus, Diometra allowed him to leave the Earth without further battle.

After the departure of Nebuzalor, Diometra returned to her work. When Materio next came to visit and assist her with the shifting of the lands, she only told him that Nebuzalor had left and would not return. In her mind, Materio did not need to suspect war might come to his world. Her vision was too important. Thus, Materio remained ignorant and Diometra's great work continued.

[The Bronze Kaiuga - 56 KAI to 25 KAI]

Turn of the Century Sim, Bronze Simulacra (1889 D.G.S. to 1921 D.G.S.)

As the Star Clock counted another Rung, the Industrial Revolution Sim evolved into the Turn of the Century Sim. To the mind of Diometra, the work was still proving difficult, but to Materio, the changes she placed upon humanity were becoming quite significant. Many humans became entangled within the complexities of Diometra's creation. The old realities of King Materio's world swiftly became archaic and peripheral.

Materio gave the matter some thought, and after a time called upon an Earth Serpent to fly to the Yuga Star System. After a voyage through the stars, he landed upon Zul and sought the counsel of King Crystalos. And so, Materio spoke:

I trust that Diometra can see designs that I do not see, but alas, I do not understand her mind and intention and her creations leave me in a state of confusion. She has created machines on the face of the Earth—printing presses and combustion engines. Is this part of the plan? Is this the will of the Unseen? If so, why have I been told so little. Azcathar instructed me to pull humans from the clay, but never was I told of the coming of these machines.

And Crystalos said:

Even I, the husband of Diometra, cannot fully understand her heart. I have reason to believe she has seen things we have not seen. The Vaultkeeper has conveyed this to me with powers of mind. She has peered into a greater world than we can comprehend. She is transformed by Knowledge, and now she is showing us.

And so, when King Materio returned to the Green Earth, he agreed to assist Diometra in her great work. He gathered the Serpents of the Earth, and worked to carve the lands according to Diometra's visions. It was a slow work, but it meant the breaking up of the Strong Lands, and the forming of new landmasses. While Materio worked with gentle hands, the Earth did not go without some pain. There was

the sinking of entire ecosystems, and for those human civilizations who did migrate when warned, there was great loss of life.

Meanwhile, on the Planet of Sutra, Diazarah continued her watch over the Hall of Gates. From her many doorways, she could see many things. One such doorway led her to the Veil of Nebuzalor and into his Dark Axis. Here, she could see the things that lived in the deep. While she had seen crimson Sultans before, upon Hexos, she had never seen what now stood before her. They were called the Silhouettes, beings wrought of pure shadow. They were the sort of creatures that could twist an observer's psyche—creatures of nightmare.

She now understood Nebuzalor was lost to her. His longing for the Knowledge of Azcathar had decimated him. His jealousy of Crystalos had poisoned his mind further still.

[The Iron Kaiuga - 24 KAI to 9 KAI]

Early Twentieth Century Sim, Iron Simulacra (1922 D.G.S. to 1938 D.G.S.)

With the next Rung came the next Simulacra of Diometra. While she still had not perfected her work, she was making clear and steady progress. The meta-reality which she had witnessed was mapping onto the world with a great deal more precision. The Glimiran Automata had been of great service. Even Materio with his Earth Serpents had assisted her in the carving of the lands. The vision of Diometra was now becoming clear.

Diometra had completed the first phase of implementing technologies. Now she was focused on sculpting complex cities and sociologies. New York City. Hollywood. London. Paris. Tokyo. These were among the projects she had carefully reconstructed from her secret visions of the meta-reality of the Unseen.

By this Iron Era, the dominions of Diometra upon the broken lands of the Earth were bustling with automobiles, electricity, telephones, and motion pictures. It was an Era set after a Great War. The broken lands were now divided into nations and alliances. The first decade of this era could be characterized by industrial growth and development, radio technologies, celebration, jazz, sports heroes and movie stars.

But soon a Black Tuesday came, and the world crashed to a halt. Of course, Diometra was dispassionate about this. To her designs, the stock market crash was just another complexity of the larger picture. Worse yet, in the lands called Europe and Asia, totalitarian movements such as Fascism and State Communism were taking hold—more unfortunate aspects of the meta-reality that required simulation.

Materio watched all of this growing unease. Whatever reality Diometra had seen in her visions, it was one of insanity. A second great war was stirring. If these horrific visions somehow reflected the minds of the Unseen, then the Vault itself might be polluted beyond repair. Fear spread across the lands now divided. Tanks positioned themselves in the soil. Armies stood ready for war.

[The Steel Kaiuga - 8 KAI to 1 KAI]

The Second World War Sim, Steel Simulacra (1939 D.G.S. to 1947 D.G.S.)

The time known as the Second World War Sim only lasted for eight years upon the Green Earth. Zul scientists who have observed the Green Earth from space concluded that Diometra's Steel Simulacra

was fully viable. All of the dressings of industrial society were not only set in place, but the planet's inhabitants were also completely immersed within the narrative reality of the sim.

For humans of the Green Earth locked within the Steel Simulacra, the world was falling swiftly into war. It began with a rise in extreme ideologies. Then came invasions, and the responses to those invasions. Eventually it was all out warfare—destruction, genocides, and horrors previously unfathomed.

Observing the Earth from planet Zul, the leadership of the Greys of Zoldor placed questions of the Green Earth under careful deliberation. Whatever world Diometra was creating, it was driving the humans crazy.

After much discussion, the Zul elected to place a forcefield around the whole of Materio's Sunga star system. On its face, this decision would appear as a way to protect the Green Earth from outside metalling. It could deflect meteors and deter any potential ambitions of Nebuzalor. But, beneath the surface, the wise Greys of planet Zul were becoming worried of technological humanity. For among the inventions humans now held, atomic weaponry was in the works.

When Diometra next flew her Silver Serpent to Zul, she was received as Queen. But, on the issue of nuclear arms, King Crystalos questioned her judgment with great seriousness. And, Crystalos spoke:

Were nuclear arms truly a necessary element of simulation? Must your vision be so unforgiving? There is war all across Materio's world as a result of your designs. Now they are building their own doom. It is a question whether or not humanity can even harness such powers. It was my perception that humanity was to one day reach the stars, but now I fear they will blow themselves into oblivion.

And Diometra spoke:

In all of my time, I have never lied to thee. The world of the Unseen is a world bathed in warfare all throughout its own strange history. After seeing through the Jade Serpent's mighty Veil, I have but witnessed the madness of reality and only wish to understand it so that we may better understand the Vault and our places within. It has pained me to see how humanity operates, but it has also given me clarity. They will make it through this horror, into a beautiful time of television and cubicle office jobs. But what comes in the following century, I cannot say until I run the simulations further. If I can perfect my Simulacra, perhaps the Unseen will observe our Vault to witness the unfolding of their own reality. Perhaps they will then make changes to avoid their own destruction. You see, this is my purpose.

And Crystalos thought about these words for a long while, and decided to let the matter rest.

For Crystalos, other worries soon grew. Zul space crafts traveling to the Raga System returned from their missions with reports of Hexos. It appeared Nebuzalor was breeding larger armies of Spiders, Sultans, and Silhouettes.

And soon after, Queen Diazarah came to planet Zul through a doorway in the Hall of Gates. With her now were two great Lynxes, Guardians of Gates commanded to assist the Queen in her watch of her expansive realms. For there were many doorways in the halls, and it was now apparent to her that Nebuzalor had been using them without her knowing to transport his armies from Hexos to elsewhere. Through what doorways his growing forces had journeyed, Diazarah did not know for certain. But, she had seen the husks of hideous segmented creatures all throughout the Halls—long paths of bug shit and slime.

She explained this matter to King Crystalos, who swiftly sent several crews of Zul Greys in ships to investigate. From this point onward, the Zul Greys would be tasked with watching the Crystalline Galaxy and reporting Nebuzalor's movements back to the Hall of Crystalos. For good measure, other

crews of Zul would be sent to the Sunga System to watch over the development of humanity. For Crystalos now saw his own task and purpose to maintain order amongst the many worlds of the Crystalline Galaxy. He was now beginning to understand the heavy weight of this responsibility. The Great Stars of the Vault existed in a delicate balance. He would have to maintain neutrality in all things to properly assess and address the conflicts of many planets. The fate of the Vault was dependent upon it.

In the Years After...

There is much history guided by the hands of Aeonima in the Ages that follow the eight Rungs. At the end of the next era, in a time known throughout the Galaxy as the New Beginning and referred to on the Green Earth as the Good Ol' Days, Diometra's Simulations continued. For over six decades the sim was remarkably stable, but as the sixty-four year period neared its unforeseen close, human scientists upon the Green Earth grew greedy for Knowledge. Using the fallen shards of meteors, they opened portals to the veils of both Adularia and Nebuzalor.

While they were fascinated by the portal to the Adularian Ephemeral Realm which lay behind the first portal, the second portal which led to the Dark Nebuzalorian Axis meant complete disaster for the Earth and humanity. Nebuzalor saw this as his opportunity to attack Materio, using the horrific ecology of creatures who lived behind his Veil as his army.

This led to an event known to history as the Auros Boros. In this time, Nebuzalor fought Materio, and in their calamity, splintered the Green Earth's pale moon. From thereafter it was known as the Shattered Moon, a ceaseless reminder that reality was somehow broken. The battle ended with Nebuzalor's defeat of Materio, with Materio's remains stricken into the deepest darkest trenches of the Earth's oceans.

That was not the end of the destruction. Nebuzalor amassed his Lesser Serpents gathered from the caves of Hexos, and sent them through the Nebuzalorian Axis portalgate, and he commanded the armies to smash the lands and seas of the Green Earth to end the dominion of Diometra's Sim. When the destruction was seen, Diometra became so distraught that she returned to Glimira and fell into a deep and unending slumber. Thus, Nebuzalor ended not one but two of his Order in this disastrous time.

With Materio and Diometra fallen, and Nebuzalor on a warpath, the remaining Aeonima were in great pain. It was Nebuzalor's wife, Diazarah, who subverted the functionality of his portal gate and Veil, Guarding it from her Halls. Without his gate, Nebuzalor was unable to bring reinforcements to the Green Earth for his army. Meanwhile, the ecology of Adularia's Veil and homeworld had spread into the waters of the Green Earth and her spores spread in the air. With great determination, she was able to drive out and destroy most of the Nebuzalorian Ecology that had ravaged the Earth. But humanity had fallen into darkness, as history became incoherent, and humans were forced to survive under the Earth's surface.

Upon witnessing these atrocities, Crystalos asked Azcathar why the Unseen would do this to the Vault.

Why would the Unseen, who created the Vault, and asked of us order and just governance, allow for such destruction to occur? Why would they create Nebuzalor only to watch him twist and writhe into a creature of war?

And Azcathar answered, speaking to Crystalos for a second time.

The Unseen constructed the Vault, just as the Aeonima built upon the living worlds within it. They are mysterious. To them who dwell beyond the limits of the Vault, ye are only small notches upon a great

ledger. Lives within the Vault are but sand. Perhaps our universe is but an expression of their need for entertainment. If our universe is to survive and flourish, ye must remain resolute in thine greater mission. Thou art the King of Zul, and the Chief of thine Order. A long war is upon ye. Do not waver from the truest path, and succeed where Nebuzalor will fail. Conquer only thine own self. Build this Vault and sculpt it in Crystalline.

Azcathar became quiet knowing he would not speak again for over eight hundred years.

The Expanded 3000 Year Timeline:

The Kaiugas [Adularian term meaning *Rungs*. There were eight Kaiugas total.]

- The Vearga:** The Jade Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 1024 Green Earth Years
(2040 KAI to 1017 KAI) - Creation of the Vault and Stars
- The Vethraga:** The Ruby Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 512 Green Earth Years
(1016 KAI to 505 KAI) - Age of Gifts
- The Vaonia:** The Diamond Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 256 Green Earth Years
(504 KAI to 121 KAI) Creation of Intelligent Living Beings
- The Theonia:** The Golden Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 128 Green Earth Years
(248 KAI to 121 KAI) Age of untainted Civilization
- The Daonia:** The Silver Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 64 Green Earth Years
(120 KAI to 57 KAI) Industrial Revolution Sim
- The Thearga:** The Bronze Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 32 Green Earth Years
(56 KAI to 25 KAI) Turn of the Century Sim
- The Demiarga:** The Iron Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 16 Green Earth Years
(24 KAI to 9 KAI) Early Twentieth Century Sim
- The Demionia:** The Steel Kaiuga - 8 Central Great Star Rotations synced to 8 Green Earth Years
(8 KAI to 1 KAI) The Second World War Sim

The Main Timeline:

The Good Ol' Days -	64 Green Earth Years
The Days of the Void -	187 Green Earth Years (by Adularian Reckoning)
Engines Era (Steam, Diesel) -	120 Green Earth Years (0 D.C. to 119 D.C.)
Tech Era (Atomic, Mid, High, Late) -	210 Green Earth Years (120 D.C. to 329 D.C.)
Spacefaring Era	200 Green Earth Years (330 D.C. to 529 D.C.)
Unseen Epochs	155 Green Earth Years (530 to 685 D.C.)
Brilliant Grace	24 Green Earth Years (The Reordering)

Alignments of the Aeonima:

Crystalos: Light/Neutral

Diometra: Neutral/Neutral

Adularia: Light/Good

Materio: Light/Good

Diazarah: Dark/Neutral

Nebuzalor: Dark/Evil

A Map of the Green Earth - As Seen in Later Ages (Tech Era)

Note: This is how the world reformed after the Auros Boros Apocalyptic Event, the great battles of Nebuzalor and Materio, and the shattering of the Green Earth's moon.



Azcathar the Vaultkeeper - The Jade Serpent (Illustration)

Azcathar resided in the Central Great Star of Azcath, except for when traversing the Crystalline Galaxy with Lord Crystalos of Zul as his rider.

