

Legacy of the Gloom



n the ancient, stone-veiled city of Nir Tuldur, the day begins long before the pale glimmer of dawn breaks through the rocks above. There is no sun to rise freely into the sky here—only a timid shard of light that squeezes through a narrow gap, just enough to signal that time, however fleeting, is still moving forward.

The Lightminers gather in silence before the colossal iron gates, shoulders hunched, eyes dim but steady. They wait not for orders, but for the sound of the bell — a single, resonant toll that marks the beginning of the race. When it rings, the gates rumble open with the grinding weight of centuries. Without speaking, the Lightminers step out from the safety of the stone walls and into the hostile expanse beyond.

They carry little: a pouch of tools, a ration of dried roots, a shard of reflective glass. There is no luxury in daylight. Only urgency. As they spread beyond the gate, a hush falls upon the land. Then, with discipline sharpened by necessity, they run — not in panic, but with a precise desperation. For even as dawn breaks, the sun begins to fade.

Light is a rationed gift in this world, and its departure always comes too soon.

The Lightminers march before dawn, each bound to the fragile hours of brightness that hold the world together. The old ones call them Lightbound — those chained to the day.

Because when the dusk falls — and it always does, quickly — nothing survives the night.

This is life in the Age of Gloom.



The Empire of Gloom

For thousands of years, the empire has been ruled by an eternal triad of dwarves known only as the Triumvirate. These are not kings in name or rulers by title — they are the mountain itself. Immutable. Indivisible. Enduring.

Whispers speak of ancient pacts, or forgotten magic, or something far older. The truth is buried beneath stone and silence. What matters is that they have never died, and they have never relinquished power.

Each of the three reigns from their city, and each city is a pillar that holds up the whole world.

- **Thralgor**, the Eternal Smith, rules from the City of Lava, where rivers of molten fire feed endless forges. Its streets glow with the eternal flow of magma, and the scent of iron and brimstone lingers in the air. Weapons are born, armor is cast, and war is prepared in silence. The rhythm of the forges never ceases, echoing like the heartbeat of the empire.



- **Baelgrim**, the Warden of Hidden Flames, tends the City of Luminous Fruit, an underground sanctuary bathed in ethereal light. Groves of bioluminescent orchards stretch endlessly beneath stone arches, their glow sustained by ancient rites. Here, food is not merely sustenance; it is magic woven into life, a fragile thread that binds the empire's survival.



- **Thalindra**, the Rune-Shade, is the ghost-mistress of the City of Arcane Runes, carved into the oldest mountain. Her city is a labyrinth of towering stone spires, etched with symbols that shimmer faintly with arcane power. Mist clings to its streets, whispering secrets of forgotten ages. It is said that even the walls breathe with latent magic, pulsing softly with each spell woven by her hand.



Though they rule together, the balance is fragile.
Each city depends on the others:

- Lava needs fruit and potion.
- Fruit needs blades and sorcery.
- Runes need sustenance and fire.

The tunnels that connect them are guarded night and day. No citizen questions the Triumvirate — not because they are beloved, but because they are inevitable.

Under the ever-hungry night, diversity persists, molded by necessity and survival. Silent alliances and rivalries dwell under the Surface. Race matters nothing, only loyalties — to the

Triumvirate, or to the dream of something far beyond.

No Gods. No Salvation.

Religion is forbidden. Worship is seen as subversion. No shrines remain; no chants are heard. Those who pray are erased — quietly, swiftly, without trial. The Triumvirate allows no rival to belief. There is only obedience, and the order that springs from it.

Even so, rebellion stirs beneath the earth. Whispers in the dark. Symbols scratched into forgotten corners. A silent resistance kindles among the desperate, the broken, the hopeful.

There are those who remember names not found in state records. Those who draw maps in dust and dream of wind on their faces. In tunnels too narrow for soldiers, voices meet in darkness. Some call them fools. Others call them heroes. They call themselves necessary.

The elite guard—armored from head to toe in polished steel—hunt them without rest or mercy. No one knows what lies beneath those helms. No one dares ask.

Still, the resistance grows. Quietly. Desperately.

Some still dream of a world not ruled by fear and shadow. A world that breathes beneath the sky, not the stone-cold roof of caves. A world where the sun shines again for all alike.

And it is into this world—of silent marches, burning forges, forbidden hope, and creeping shadows—that Gralak, Emeryn, and Trista take each step.

Not as saviors. Not yet.

But as those who endure.

Deep within the mountain, unseen and uninvited, a new age has begun to stir in its cradle.

It is not an age of sorrow.

It is an age of fire.

An age of rebellion.

An age still unnamed... but not unwelcome.

The night is vast.

But even a single spark can challenge the endless dark.

