

A new story, a new plane, a new atmosphere. Lorwyn Lore

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From darkness to sunshine, from destruction to idyll... The contrast in setting between the new block, *Lorwyn*, and the previous block, *Time Spiral*, couldn't be bigger. You'll be introduced to a world that is sun drenched and idyllic, but that hardly means it's peaceful. **Magic** creative set out to show that it was possible to have an interesting setting and cards without giant armies or impending cataclysms casting a shadow over everything, and they've succeeded with *Lorwyn*. If you think a world without a Yawgmoth or a Karona must be boring, this block will shatter your preconceptions.



Lorwyn is a world at peace, where the warm sun never grows too hot and never sets. The forests are generally calm and tranquil, the fields cool and breezy. Instead of oceans, a network of cold, clean rivers and ponds crisscross the landscape. Even the swamps, as smelly and slimy as they are, do not hold the kind of threats that many other worlds' swamps do. There are no marauding dragons, no flesh-hungry undead, no selfish humans seeking to exploit the land and its people. Of course, just because there's no one out to destroy the world doesn't mean there isn't any conflict. With the wide variety of races and attitudes across this plane, it's inevitable that there will be some head butting. Let's take a look at the folk that make Lorwyn home.

We start with the **kithkin**, who already got a bit of a preview in *Future Sight*. They are known for their skill at creating everything from folk medicine to weaponry, and live in villages called *clachans*. Major regions are led by *cenns*, kithkin particularly apt at tactics, leadership, or diplomacy. But much of what makes kithkin who they are comes from *thoughtweft*. This empathic bond connects all kithkin, making each individual subconsciously aware of each other's thoughts, moods, and actions. This gives them the ability to cooperate like no other species and is the basis for many other kithkin qualities. For example,



they are famed as sympathetic listeners, which strengthens their ties to each other and other races. In fact, they compare their society, and life itself, to the "wend and weave" of cloth; all is connected and interdependent. They are also a superstitious people. Everything from healing to farming to warfare is fraught with little rituals, charms, and ways to avoid ill luck.

The **merrow** are merfolk who dwell in the rivers and streams that are spread throughout the world. In fact, they don't just live in them – they *control* them. Water magic allows merrow to create new rivers and divert old ones. Because of this, no one knows the Merrow Lanes (as Lorwyn's rivers are called) better than the merfolk. They use this knowledge to travel the world, serving as messengers, traders, and diplomats. Merrow are somewhat "cold fish," with limited and restrained emotions. They make up for this with razor-sharp minds and razor-sharp tongues. Just as kithkin are Lorwyn's best listeners, merrow are the best talkers, able to placate and persuade better than anyone. Like fish, merrow travel in tight knit schools, groups of merfolk united by common interests or purpose, whether it's commerce, changing the Lanes, or exploring the system of underground waterways known as the Dark Meanders.



Treefolk are one of the races making a full-scale return to **Magic** after a long absence. The longest lived of any Lorwyn mortal, they are wise, protective, and strong. They start out as normal trees, until they undergo a change known as the Rising sometime during their sapling stage. Partly as a result, treefolk tend to be very concerned about the health and welfare of the forests they live in, as well as the fauna that make that forest home. Treefolk are a varied race, with personalities and purpose largely depending on their species. For example, ashes are the warriors and druids, birches the scouts, rowans the mystics, and black poplars the shamans with dark regenerative powers. One of the best known, and most unique, treefolk is Colfenor, thought to be the only yew treefolk on Lorwyn. He is extremely old and very mysterious. Some think he harbors some dark, unique knowledge that could impact all of Lorwyn, but even if he does, he is the type not to tell.



Giants also wander Lorwyn. Some are wanderers who care nothing about borders or small folk, while others are hermits so wise that other races come to them for arbitration and diplomacy. This divide is emphasized by the fact that giants "live large"—when they feel something, they do not go halfway. Angry giants are *really* angry, and introspective giants *extremely* introspective. The vast majority of giants can't really understand how to interact with the smaller races; their lifespan and perspective are so different that they tend to do things their own way, without much regard for those ant-sized beings around them. A giant's main enemies tend to be other giants, thanks to their territoriality and single-mindedness. Giants act big, but they also sleep big. Their dreams are as epic as their lives; in fact, young giants derive their names from what they dream during this *namesleep*. Names are important to giants; they are summations of what the giant does and believes in. You can see examples in the mad vagabond seer Rosheen Meanderer and the arbiter Galanda Feudkiller.



Flamekin are intense, passionate elementals made of stone and flame. They are daredevils and adventurers. Their ability to turn their body's fires from cold to intensely hot makes them deadly enemies in battle. Flamekin are semi-nomadic, born out of a desire to explore new lands and experience life to the fullest. They are a much wiser race than one might expect, being adherents of the Path of Flame, a process of physical and spiritual self-discovery that revolves around the fires that constantly burn upon their bodies. The Path is very dangerous, and very few flamekin see it to the end, especially since that end involves a fiery death the likes of which is rarely seen. Their flame is seen as a threat by the elves, and conflict may be brewing between the two races.



The **faeries** are whimsical, mischievous, vain, and seen as nuisances by most of the other Lorwyn races. Their pranks are usually relatively harmless but always annoying and embarrassing. They live extremely short lives, but in that time they live to the fullest, constantly looking for new tricks to ease their boredom. Though they usually use their small forms and potent sleep or illusion magic to evade enemies, they can still fight remarkably well when



necessary. Faeries can also use their magic to invade and steal dreams, especially the powerful ones of giants. They claim to do this for the benefit of their queen, Oona, though the faerie reputation is such that many doubt if Oona even exists. Faeries travel in groups called *cliques*, and use rings set in the ground to travel cross the world in the blink of an eye.

Boggarts are muck-dwelling goblins that are all about the new: new sensations, new possessions, new experiences. Their lives revolve around the novel and interesting, and they stop at nothing to possess or feel new things. In fact, the sharing of new objects and sensations is the only real law boggarts have; those that break it are never forgiven. Warrens of these crude goblins are led by "aunties" (though they aren't necessarily female), usually boggarts of great age and experience who explain the meaning behind things or sensations that are particularly puzzling. The greatest auntie of all is Auntie Grub, whose ancient tales still guide boggart behavior. Feasts are one way for boggarts in different warrens to get together and share new things and sensations. As one might expect, these gatherings are wild and disgusting in the extreme.



If you think you know **elves**, you might have to reevaluate it all while you're here in Lorwyn. Although these elves live in forests and interact with nature just like other planes' elves do, their attitude and outlook are very different. Lorwyn elves are obsessed with beauty and perfection; social status and societal power are entirely determined by physical looks. These elves are not afraid to twist nature into more beautiful shapes of their choosing, and they claim complete ownership over all that is beautiful, even sentient beings. The worst thing any being can be is ugly, and elves, in their arrogance, rarely (if ever) see other races as anything but hideous. In fact, the ugly, known as *aseyebights* to the elves, are shunned at best, and at worst are actively hunted, enslaved, even killed with the potent toxin *moonglove*.



Two other races take center stage in this set. **Changelings** are mysterious, generally unintelligent creatures who take the shape of any other being close to them. This mimicry is crude and unconvincing, which leads to no end of annoyance when they try to actually penetrate foreign societies. Elves are especially disdainful of such effort. **Greater elementals** are the purest essence of

various dreams and ideas. They usually take animal form, though these forms are strange beyond imagining. None know much about them, though kithkin study them as portents of the future.

The *Lorwyn* storyline introduces us to these races and their conflicts, and to Rhys, an elvish outcast who has to push his skills to the limit to survive the predations of his own people. He will travel across the land and make both friends and enemies amongst the other races. He will also hear tales of a secret so dark and disturbing that few even know what it is. But daily life for him is enough of a struggle on its own. Complicating things even further is a mysterious stranger who seems to have an agenda of her own. How Rhys and his fellows deal with it all is their ultimate test.

Of course, as usual we have a preview card, and another legendary creature takes center stage. Though kithkin may appear to be small and harmless, this is a misconception that has fallen more than one opponent in battle. Their thoughtweft enables their armies to coordinate like no other, dissipating any disadvantage their size brings. Their forges and artisans produce some of the finest weapons and armor in the world. And then there are the cenns, the leaders whose wisdom and experience prove their worth time and time again. Gaddock Teeg, cenn of the clachan of Kinsbaile, is one of those leaders. Click [here](#) to see what I'm talking about.



Gaddock is all about giving his side an advantageous playing field. White and green are famed for their strong, low-cost creatures but are vulnerable to spells that can destroy large numbers of small critters at once, such as *Damnation* and *Molten Disaster*. And, of course, a well-placed *Demonfire* or

Dragonstorm can ruin anyone's day pretty quickly. Gaddock shuts those cards down, forcing opponents to fight on your terms. Creatureless decks may find their efforts particularly hampered, though any deck that depends on a powerful or expensive spell might find a hard time of it. Kithkin enjoy a relatively simple life; Gaddock is a fine example of putting that culture to practical purpose.

Lorwyn is a vast and rich world, full of interesting things to discover, despite not being a place of gloom and despair. It's quite a change, but we think you'll be as comfortable in this world as its inhabitants are. Until next time, enjoy the sun... just don't get yourself burnt.