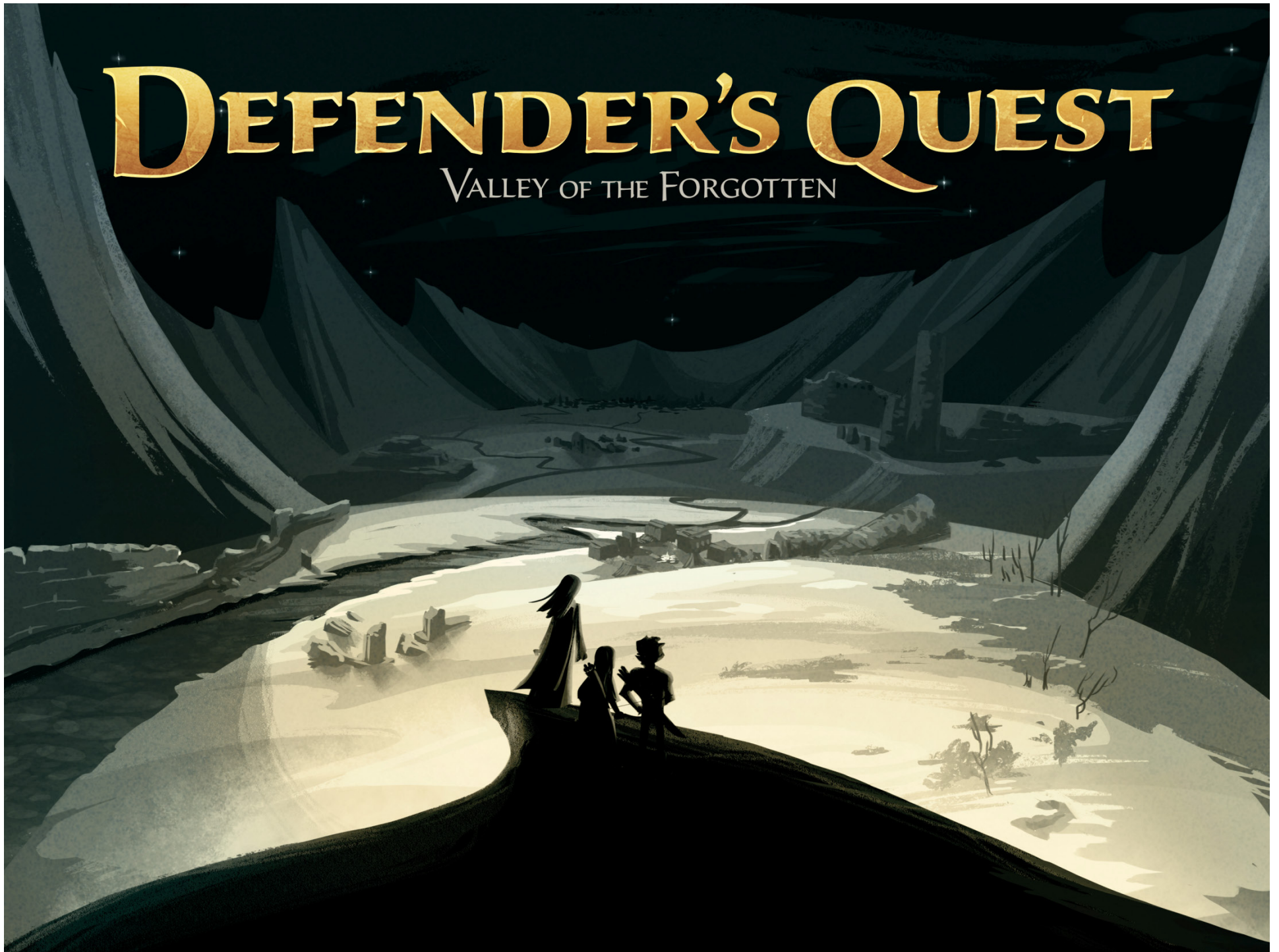


DEFENDER'S QUEST

VALLEY OF THE FORGOTTEN





Character Bios

WARNING: May contain minor spoilers!

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Azra Livbar

Age: 23

Nationality: Ash

Occupation: Librarian

Before being exiled to The Pit, Azra was a librarian in the royal archives of the Ash Kingdom. Coming from a long line of royal servants, she has enjoyed a comfortable upper-middle-class lifestyle.

Thrust into the pit after contracting the plague, she finds herself vulnerable, alone, and in very real danger for the first time in her life.

Once, her motto was to find contentment in whatever position you are in. Now that she's stuck in The Pit, this is significantly harder to follow. Although she doesn't consider herself a leader, others are attracted to her intelligence, resourcefulness, and will to press forwards against all obstacles.

Highly educated, she is one of only a few Pit dwellers who can read and write, let alone expound upon the socio-economic underpinnings of the many wars between Ash and the Quaid Empire.



Slakmontius Azimontar

Age: 26

Nationality: Ash

Occupation: Bandit, Thug, Mercenary

Prior to his incarceration in the pit, Slak came from an incredibly wealthy upper-class family from the very top of Ash society.

As a child, his parents tended to be more involved with their important government jobs than raising their son, so he spent most of the time entertaining himself and getting into trouble. He still carries a mixture of resentment and desperate desire to be accepted.

When his parents sent him to complete his studies in a far-off northern city, he quickly left his post in search of adventure, contracted the plague, and found himself confined to The Pit. He's been a professional adventurer and mercenary ever since.

He's more than happy to follow Azra, as he hates the idea of being responsible for anything, and she brings him ample opportunities to kill stuff. In battle, he shows a genuine lack of fear for physical dangers, most likely from a mixture of extreme bravery and mental instability.

Despite his bravado, he always runs away from challenges that can't be solved with violence or charm. He hates showing any weakness or emotional vulnerability, and never speaks of his life outside The Pit.



Ketta Takili en Geka

Age: 21

Nationality: Nomad

Occupation: Hunter, Poacher, Con Artist

Ketta is one of the few survivors of the Geka tribe, which was massacred by a rival nomad group disparagingly known as the “Cult of the Blood Mad.” She narrowly escaped this tragedy only to contract the plague and get dumped into The Pit.

After her recovery, she found herself alone in a dangerous and foreign world. She quickly transformed into a rugged individualist, depending on no one and doing whatever it took to survive.

Her skills as a hunter, tracker, and outdoorswoman put her head and shoulders above the former city-dwellers and other former Ash and Quaid citizens unused to life in the wilderness. (She was an expert rider, too, but that was of little help since all the horses in The Pit had long since been eaten)

She’s blocked out the worst memories from her past and finds fulfillment in simply waking up alive. To her, anything beyond that is gravy.

She views Azra with a mix of suspicion and strained friendship. They come from extremely different cultural backgrounds, but can find common ground when Azra is in one of her more cynical moods.



Bakal Kozar

Age: 58

Nationality: Ash

Occupation: Seleni Monk, Retired General

Elder Bakal serves in the Chapter House of the 7th Branch of Seleni, a monastery in the middle of The Pit, built to serve the plague victims and offer what little medical treatment is possible.

Although technically only a brother monk, having never attained (or sought) the rank of priesthood, he is held in the highest regard by his order and is commonly addressed using the Ash honorifics for “Elder” and “Father.”

Though outwardly humble and relaxed, he bears a great burden of shame and guilt for actions he took part in during the war with Quaid. Having left both his national allegiance and his military life behind, he seeks solace and repentance amidst the infected.

An expert in military tactics as well as medicine and theology, he sees divine purpose in Azra’s arrival and quickly becomes her trusted mentor. In teaching and following her, he hopes to unlock the secrets of The Pit, save its suffering people, and atone for his sins.



Wrenna lan Laxmi

Age: 22

Nationality: Quaid

Occupation: Warrior, deposed Crown Princess

Before the plague, Wrenna was heir to the throne of the Quaid Empire. The populace saw the Imperial family as divinely chosen, and though many aristocrats saw this as simply a tool for control, the last Emperor was an ardent follower who raised his children in strict devotion to the faith.

The Imperial cult is a fairly sophisticated monotheistic religion based on fire worship. Imperial family members are seen as children of the Cosmic Flame, and by bringing glory to Quaid they earn the right to rejoin their progenitor in the afterlife.

Those that fail to bring glory are stricken from all records. Many Emperors have been overthrown and killed by their own subjects for supposedly ignoring their duties. The ongoing wars with Ash were great chances for many generations to “bring honor to the Empire” through conquest.

After the fall of Quaid, Wrenna was taken prisoner and confined to The Pit, originally a POW camp. She was ratted out by one of her own people, and only escaped when the plague overwhelmed the guards. She fled only to find herself infected, and collapsed. She awoke in the care of Seleni nuns.

Traumatized and vengeful, Wrenna is utterly devoted to an empire that no longer exists and will stop at nothing to rebuild it.



Markos Kashantir

Age: 27

Nationality: Ash

Occupation: Knight, Guard, Minor Prince

Markos is related to the Ash royal family, but only distantly. Like most nobles, he was trained in both military arts and the classics from a young age, exemplifying the standards of both a warrior and a scholar.

When The Plague began to spill over the borders of Ash, he was called back from the front lines and re-assigned to guard duty over The Pit, keeping the infected under quarantine. As cynicism and brutality among the guards rose to match the increasing desperation of the infected, he grew conflicted and briefly considered defying his orders.

Before he could decide, his entire squad contracted the plague and was forced to march into The Pit in self-exile. Though they tried to burn the bodies of the fallen before the corpses could rise again as invincible revenant, fuel was scarce and they left many behind. This incensed nearby survivors, who already had ample reason to despise the guards.

These denizens of The Pit met them with violence and rage. Though Markos' men were superior fighters by far, they were weakened and outnumbered. They fled to the caverns and walled themselves in, counting on tales of dragons to keep the mob at bay.

Bound by honor, guilt, and a desire to set things right, Markos is determined to save his men, as well as the people of The Pit who show him nothing but hate.



Niru

Age: 700 (estimate)

Allegiance: Self

Occupation: god (self-proclaimed)

Seeking refuge from the plague, survivors initially flocked to the interior caverns of The Pit, only to discover a fierce and territorial dragon. Since then only the most desperate survivors are willing to take the risk of dwelling there.

Little is known about the mysterious beast who calls herself Niru, but like many dragons, she calls herself a god, and dismissively refers to short-lived humans as “mortals.”

Nomad shepherds speak of her in hushed, frightened tones lest they invoke her wrath upon their flocks, for she is known to be swift, violent, and mother to a large brood of hungry baby dragons.

It's anyone's guess as to why such a powerful and proud creature would choose to live in a desolate place like The Pit rather than fly away in search of better hunting grounds.

For her part, Niru shares no secrets with mortals.