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## The Importance of Being Convergent Scenario and Rules

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# 1 Background

Tetrana is a small but ancient kingdom, boasting great mineral wealth, large stretches of fertile farmland, and a prosperous port on the Inland Sea. It is generally considered a monarchy, but its customs differ from those of the neighboring kingdoms: Osken, strong in trade and metalwork; Izar, aggressive and independent; and Anscaria, known for strong guilds and universities.

Tetrana's most distinctive feature is its strong caste system. Every individual is born into one of the four castes, each based around one of the elements: Air, Fire, Water, or Earth. Each caste has rigidly defined roles in society and a rigidly defined place in the social hierarchy:

- **Air:** aristocrats and artists, tasked with governance over the land and owed fealty by the other three castes.
- **Fire:** soldiers and commanders, charged with national defense and military operations under Air government oversight.
- **Water:** merchants, traders, shopkeepers, and clerics. The Water caste is responsible for both domestic and international commerce and much of the operations of urban life, and pays taxes that support the upper two castes.
- **Earth:** peasants, farmers, woodcutters, and miners. The Earth caste works hard to provide the raw materials of the nation, and make payments in kind to the other castes in exchange for the land they work, protection, and opportunities to trade.

Tetrana has long maintained a policy of isolationism, avoiding entanglement in international affairs. Some believe that Tetrana's continued independence and prosperity despite being a small country without strong allies is due to its strong magic, tied to the elemental gems that are found only in Tetrana and said to be preserved by maintaining the restrictions of the caste system. Many of Tetrana's traditions are based around the ideas of keeping the elements pure and strong: for example, it is forbidden to transport any elemental gems outside Tetrana's borders, to marry further than one caste above or below your own,<sup>1</sup> or to use magic in violence. Elemental magic is used widely in daily life in Tetrana for everything from practical purposes like growing crops and fast transportation to such things as delicate moving sculptures and cakes that defy gravity. However, magic takes much preparation, and any supernatural activities other than those involved in the Convergence itself would be highly improper.

# 2 The Convergence

## Game Schedule

- **45 minutes in:** voting on the Questions of Tradition
- **1 hour in:** the Realignment takes place
- **1:30 in:** end of the period for auspicious weddings

The most unusual feature of Tetrana's caste system is that it is not the immutable structure one might expect. Every 100 years, a mystical Convergence of the four elements occurs, and it is possible to reshape the structure of society. Today, you are privileged to be part of one of the four castes' delegations to the Convergence. With the proper application of magic and spiritual energy, you could create a Realignment and change the ordering of the castes for the next 100 years.

Of course, a complete rearrangement of society would be chaos. The possibilities before you, while significant, are restricted. The Realignment could at most exchange the position of any two adjacent castes. Thus, you could swap Air and Fire, Fire and Water, or Water and Earth. Alternately, you could decide against a Realignment and maintain the status quo.

A newly raised caste would attain additional prestige and privilege, and now receives fealty and support from a caste that used to be above them. In addition, a Realignment changes which individuals outside your caste you would be eligible to marry.

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<sup>1</sup>Marrying outside your caste at all is frowned upon, but it does happen once in a great while.

With the new possibilities for marriage after a Realignment and the general holiness of the Convergence, weddings are frequently carried out immediately after a Realignment. The first thirty minutes after the Realignment are thought to be particularly auspicious, bringing great fortune and happiness to the new couple.

## **2.1 Questions of Tradition**

Beyond the possibility of a Realignment, the Convergence is also the traditional time to revisit key principles of law and custom in Tetrana, traditions that have been enshrined with great force. Castes can propose alterations to the traditions of Tetrana, and the delegates vote to decide these Questions.

This Convergence, three Questions have been brought before the delegates:

- **Air:** Should Tetrana abandon its policy of isolationism and pursue an alliance and mutual defense agreement with Osken?
- **Fire:** Should the prohibition of magic in battle be removed, and research into the use of Fire magic in combat be permitted?
- **Water:** Should the ban on exporting elemental gems be lifted, allowing trade of these goods with foreign markets?

No further questions may be proposed; the time for doing so, as magically codified in the laws of Tetrana, is long past.

## **3 Rules**

This is a game. Have fun. Don't take it too seriously.

There is no combat system. Feel free to roleplay duels or other sorts of contests, however.

All characters were written as gender-neutral; feel free to decide what gender you are. There are no customs or traditions against same-sex relationships or marriages in Tetrana, nor are there other gender-based restrictions or customs.

Many of you have secrets (gasp!). This isn't some cut-throat competition. We find you get better stories if secrets get out during game, so we encourage players to set up dramatic revelations, even if the characters would be trying to keep things hidden.

Some people may be in disguise (gasp!). You start off with the name badge matching the name on your character sheet. If you have another name badge in your packet, and you reveal your true identity publicly, you may wear your alternate badge.

### **3.1 Gems and Butterflies**

Elemental gems are represented by glass beads. They come in four colors: pink/purple for air, orange for fire, blue for water, and green for earth. To summon your spirit butterfly, you need elemental gems in some particular combination: two of your elemental affinity and one of each other element. Each character has an envelope that specifies the exact set of five gems they need.

Once you have the proper gems, you must activate them by a sharing of trust. This requires you to tell someone a secret about you they don't already know. (Use a secret from your character sheet, unless somehow everyone in game already knows all your secrets.)

After you've activated your gems, you can summon your spirit butterfly. This consumes your gems, and they can no longer be traded. Open your envelope and take the butterfly out. Each butterfly is colored based on the summoner's elemental affinity. Butterflies are quite compliant once summoned, and can be treated and concealed like ordinary physical objects.

Once you have a butterfly, you can use it to steer the Realignment. There will be marked areas to place butterflies for different possible Realignments. You may place a butterfly you have there at any time. Placed butterflies cannot be removed. The option with the most butterflies at the time of Realignment will take effect. Ties will be broken by the leader of the Earth delegation.

If Air is displaced, the new monarch of all Tetrana will be chosen by the departing ruler, Ceranest.

### **3.2 Questions of Tradition**

Determining whether to change enshrined traditions will be decided by a show of hands among delegates. In the case of a tie, the leader of the delegation from the caste that proposed the question will decide.