

Of the Sky, Of the Sea, and of the Stones
Chapter 2 - Of the Sky
Part 17 - Calendar of the Aetherians

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The head librarian rose with a flip of his majestic navy blue locks. At this cue, his feline assistants hopped onto the table next to him. They then began looking around attentively and stretching. “According to protocol, we should all stay within the walls of the Central Library,” he addressed the group of scholars. “There are likely still hideous fiends on the loose, though as we’ve discussed, Temptes Equit is expecting aid from the Children of Ziz.” Cais paused before he continued in a colder tone, “According to Xiuh, herald of The Sky.”

“I understand these emergency procedures, but where are we supposed to sleep?” One broad-nosed, bespeckled individual asked.

“Anywhere within this reading area. We should all continue to stay away from the windows and doors. Myself and my assistants will sleep in shifts, to keep an eye on the situation,” the lilac-robed man replied.

“B-but...I can’t sleep without lying down!” Complained a nasally-voiced scholar from a table to the far left.

“Nonsense,” rejected one of their table neighbours, a deep-voiced lady with violet hair. “I’ve seen you fall asleep at your desk plenty of times in class, Melvin.” At this, there was a light chorus of laughter from most inhabitants of the reading area.

With the only complaint quelled, Cais bade everyone goodnight and looked to settle in at the same table he was working at earlier. Before he was able to, though, I sparked up a conversation. I desired to learn certain things before the vital questions slipped from my mind.

Olhos and Relva, the orange and green cats, curled up next to one another near a stack of Cais’ documents and books. Iridescently purple Maos seemed to be taking the first shift of the night watch. As Cais and I sat and spoke, we discussed the true name of citizens of this flying city and the calendar of the cyan folk, for these were two things I felt that I needed in order to fully quantify the information I was

absorbing. Giving names and metrics to things are instrumental to learning, as it helps one to organize thoughts more efficiently.

‘Aethereans’, were the name of these folk, for their skin was a light blue due to the effect of aethereal particles being embedded into their bodies. Spending time among the clouds bonded them with the particles of The Sky. Which, among other things, resulted in the pigment in their skin and hair shifting.

I then queried about how long it would take for this change to happen, as the Aethereans were apparently once people who lived on Okeanós’ stone islands, like myself and my colleagues in Orosilla.

Before he answered, the head librarian insisted on giving me some context. These folk of flying cities, all of which soared around Okeanós, only periodically made contact with sea or stone. They were self-sufficient and were capable of producing and collecting all of their own resources, thanks to their many inventions and innovations. But only became so after receiving knowledge from above via the Children of Ziz and their humanoid clerics.

The blue-haired man threw many facts at me then, though I’ll relate them to you in as few numerical representations as possible, lest they overwhelm minds simply seeking lore and not mathematics.

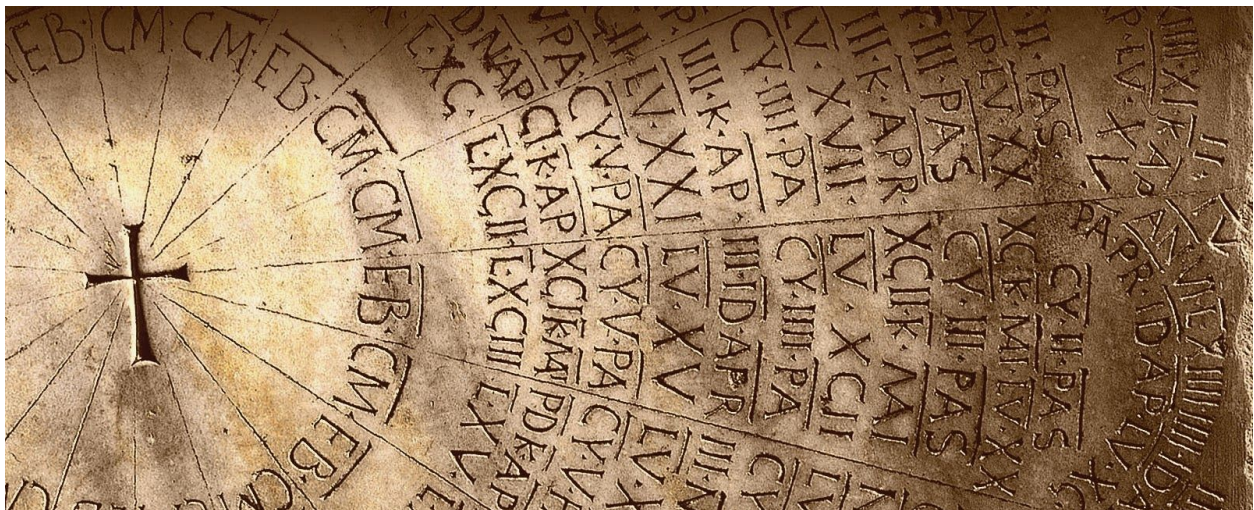


Figure 24. A stylized calendar of the Aetherians that I saw in Temptes Equit

This information was passed down from Ziz to her children, then to the clerics, and finally to humans. Allegedly, the Spark of life for all Okeanós, wreathed in flames and called the sun, stilled the harsh void and violent explosions of Chaos in this region of the universe about 1’000’000 years ago. The sea, formed by remarkable events explained in the next chapter, came into existence about 500’000 years ago. And the stone of the world came about 250’000 years ago. At these numbers, I gasped, being

staggered by the sheer amount of history of the globe, but continued to listen intently.

Humans showed up 100'000 years prior to modern day, but were not sophisticated enough to record information of any kind until 50'000 years ago. Aetherians, prior to being cyan-skinned, resided on the frigid islands of the Koivu sea, north of where Tempres Equit now hovered on the open waters of the world. Which is why their concept of 'years' is the same length as those I am familiar with from my education on Orosilla. The early Aetherians were given great knowledge in exchange for serving the gods of the Aether, and ascended on flying cities 40'000 years ago, leaving behind The Sea and The Stone.

The calendars of the Aetherians and Orossians(along with the rest of Okeanós) varied immensely, but years were still units comprising 100 days each.

After this explanation and the deluge of dates, Cais claimed he needed to go to sleep in order to be well rested for his shift. I acknowledged his desire for rest and thanked him for sharing the information. With a smile, he turned his attention then to resting his head upon his workspace, nuzzling Relva's grass-like fur, which made her purr happily. Leaving the librarians to their well earned slumber, I commandeered a comfortable looking armchair and shut my eyes as well, exhausted from an intense day.