

Ardan has always loved nature and has tried to steer his life away from getting involved with the gods and the wars that have encompassed the land. None of the wars have come close enough to him to bother him, and as such Ardan has been able to live a relatively peaceful life. In his early years, Ardan was raised in Qualinesti and grew closely with a Qualinesti friend of his named Arilistan. As the great forest was taken over by the Green Dragon overlord, Beryllinthranox, Arilistan and Ardan escaped from the forest. The two of them, unbeknownst to what has befallen the area, plan to take a ship to Southern Ergoth. Storms and very poor weather conditions put the ship far of course and it crashes near to Chisel. There were few survivors of the crash and many were wounded and had no idea where they were. Ardan took control of the situation and used his knowledge of nature and the land to lead them a great distance north. The band managed to miss the civilizations of Chisel, Lemish, and Fangoth entirely in their trek north. They thought themselves in untamed lands until Ardan led them proudly into the town of Kyre. After the people from the ship had started anew in nation of Solamnia, Arilistan informed Ardan of his magical abilities. He had managed to keep it secret from all those about him for some time. With the gods of magic returning about this time, Arilistan feared the Orders of High Sorcery, classifying him as a renegade. Knowing they needed to start fresh, Ardan led his friend northeast to a land of new possibilities, Nightlund. Ardan feels for the people of Qualinesti but had no special attachment to the place and was happy to be trekking into a world of new possibilities. On their way to Nightlund, and ultimately Kalaman, Ardan and Arilistan encountered a road-worn and disgruntled traveler. The dwarf, Duncan Axelhammer, had been robbed of all of his worldly possessions. Not believing that he, an old experienced dwarf, was the target of a successful robbery, he reluctantly asked the passersby for their assistance. After tracking down and ferreting out the bandits for this impoverished dwarf, Arilistan and Ardan returned him his possessions and his dignity by letting him fight beside them while doing it. Thankful to his new friends Duncan decided to follow these two to Kalaman, because as he says "it is the way I was headed anyway."

Ardan is very fond of Arilistan. He would try to protect him as much as he could, he fears for his friends safety and wishes that they could both live in peace with the elves. The current age prevents him from doing so. While openly he protests his desire to distance himself from wars and too much action he secretly wishes to return to Qualinesti with the elves and retake their land from those that now control it.

Arilistan's story starts in the elven home of Qualinesti. Arilistan was always a fairly quiet and thoughtful individual, but he never hesitated to show his prowess in all things, athletics included. He and his close half-elven friend Ardan tried to live a peaceful life in their homeland but this was not as fate would have it. As the dragon overlord Beryllinthranox moved to take over Qualinesti, Ardan and Arilistan were escaping together. The two of them, unbeknownst to what had befallen the Southern Ergoth decided to take a ship there. Poor weather and storms put the ship far off course and it eventually crashed near the town of Chisel. Arilistan was shocked by the whole situation and he used some of the training one of his mentors gave him in secret while he lived back in Qualinesti. In his situation Arilistan was extremely docile and following during the trip from the crash site to the town of Kyre. In fact Arilistan barely remembers the journey, as Ardan led him and the other crash survivors to safety living off the land all the while. At Kyre Ardan and Arilistan rested and regained their strength. At this time Arilistan told Ardan about his special training as a wizard. Both of them knew with the reformation the Orders of High Sorcery Arilistan may be in trouble, acquiring status as a "renegade." Ardan and Arilistan decided to travel to Kalamana in search of opportunities in the newly unveiled Nightlund. They set out and along the way encountered a Dwarf, robbed and battered on the side of the road. He gruffly asked for their assistance and Ardan and Arilistan, not being in a rush to get to Kalamana decided to help the dwarf. Duncan Axelhammer, as they learned the dwarf's name to be, had been robbed while he was traveling the road. Ardan tracked the thugs and the three of them together managed to take back Duncan's things. Joining them Duncan claimed that he was "headed in that direction anyway" when he came with them to Kalamana.

Arilistan feels very uneasy in the world, after fleeing his home. He wished things were different and does not take too much pride in escaping the mayhem in his homeland. He is also unsure of his power and what to make of it. He feels that other magic users, especially the primal sorcerers, may hunt him. Arilistan wishes to avoid any misunderstandings by using his magic at the wrong time. Arilistan is quiet of late and unhappy. He is somewhat depressed and needs a focus. Ardan tries to cheer Arilistan up, but he doesn't know how and Arilistan doesn't seem to notice.

Duncan was born in the mountain city of Thorbardin about the time of the War of the Lance. He learned the art of fighting from his father and other dwarven ancestors. He was unusual of most mountain dwarves as he was curious about the world beyond the gates. When the gates were opened in the later times of the War, Duncan slipped out as best as he could... he has disconnected himself from the Dwarven way and is considered dead by all he once knew, he told no one of his plans or curiosity. Duncan wandered away from his mountain home as quickly as he could getting experience in the world and meeting people. He was still a dwarf however, and his friendships were few and far between. Accompanied only by his drink the Dwarf wandered about the southern half of Ansalon. One fateful day while Duncan was totally inebriated, he met a gray-robed man beside a river near Pax-Tharkas. The elderly man made a bet with the drunken Duncan and Duncan's subsequent loss landed him a ride on a boat, which he detested wholeheartedly. Duncan is not proud of this event and, has never told anyone about it. Duncan doesn't remember most of the trip... and it seemed that a long while had passed when he awoke in the town of Harbor. The unnatural trip shook Duncan, but there was nothing he could do now so he let it go and began to travel again. His travels about Taman, Kern, and Nordmaar have taught Duncan even more about the surface races he was so curious about. On his way to Kalaman Duncan was surprised and robbed. After being robbed Duncan was stumbled upon by Ardan and Arilistan. Swallowing his pride Duncan asked the two of them for their assistance in retrieving his items. To his surprise the two accepted. Ardan efficiently tracked down the bandits and the three of them took his stuff back. Duncan learned of Arilistan's magic and promised he would not reveal it, as payment for retrieving his things it was the least Duncan could do. Duncan found a place in his heart for the two elf-types (not something he'd ever admit) and decided to travel with them to Kalaman, their next destination.

Duncan has found somewhat of a focus in life. He has sort of attached himself, though he'd never admit it, to the two elf-types who aided him. He wants to try to protect and guide Ardan and Arilistan. He feels like somewhat of a father to them, but he is unsure why. Duncan is very ashamed of some of the things in his past and had been wandering without focus. He is generally in good spirits now, with a new burst of companionship and adventure now upon him.

Derek hails from the heart of the nation of Solamnia, Solanthus. He grew up in an honor-bound family and early on knew that his life's journey would follow that of the knights that this region was renowned for. At a young age he met Ulstaff, a strange boy whose introverted manner intrigued Derek. After Derek was well on his way to becoming a Squire of the crown and even a Knight did him and Ulstaff begin to become friends. Ulstaff also held his spiritual life close to him, though he spoke little of his past. Despite this, they were fast friends finding their different manners of approaching good and worship to be complimentary. Before long Derek found Ulstaff as his traveling companion on his first knightly quest. Leaving Solanthus, Ulstaff and Sir Derek fought Knights of Neraka and worked to free Solamnic prisoners and help those oppressed by the Knights of Neraka. While in Palanthas, in disguise, Ulstaff and Derek were attempting to attain some important Solamnic artifacts when they met Tobias Quickstep, a kender. Tobias almost instantly considered Derek and Ulstaff friends and they even found a place in their hearts for the little kender, especially after he was instrumental in attaining the artifacts that Derek and Ulstaff sought. The three of them excitedly returned to Solanthus with their success. The knighthood freed Derek of specific duties and instructed him to present to them his destination and outline of his plans. Consulting his friends, Tobias and Ulstaff, Derek came up with a plan. He presented it to the order and they approved. Derek set out for Nightlund and Kalaman. After the eternal darkness has been lifted from the area Derek is going to survey the land and go to check in on the Solamnic outposts about the area.

Sir Derek lives by the oath *Est Sularus oth Mithas*, which means "My honor is my life." Derek believes wholeheartedly in the cause of good and justness. Derek is, as any good Solamnic Knight should be, an epitome of honor and chivalry. Evil must be defeated, the defenseless must be defended. Those who are brave and true of heart will attain honor. Derek worships Kiri-Jolith, the god of the Solamnic Knights. He believes for the most part in the dogma of Kiri-Jolith. Sir Derek does realize there is a time to leave a battle to fight another day, unless the defenseless are to be defended, in which case Derek values the lives of others over his own.

Tobias grew up in Hylo as interested in the outside world as any Kender is. He had a peaceful, normal, kender life until the wanderlust took him. He left Hylo and traveled to Solamnia. Tobias has been a very recent addition to the world at large, and his travels have been relatively few. While in Palanthus Tobias met up with his now two closest friends, Sir Derek and Ulstaff. Tobias was always interested in Knights of Solamnia, he liked their sense of honor and was always curious about their inner thoughts. They had him inspect some interesting items that he later learned were Solamnic artifacts. Tobias then traveled to Solanthus with his new found friends. After attending the exciting and interesting knighting ceremony of Sir Derek Tobias aided in the decision to go to Kalaman.

Tobias is very curious about the world and is generally very excited about all the travel he is doing with his new friends. He enjoys their company and all the interesting places they take him.

Ulstaff was born and raised mostly in the Ergothian city of Lancton. At a young age he was very introspective and ponderous. He began to worship Majere at a young age, even though the Gods had left the world. Ulstaff's parents were killed when he was thirteen and he gathered what money was left and decided to leave Northern Ergoth. He traveled south to Gwynned where he took a ship to the mainland. Ulstaff was fleeing Ergoth and the tragedy of his parent's death, he continued to bottle it up inside of him through out his journey from Portsmouth to Solanthus. At Solanthus, Ulstaff spent much time in quiet introspection and even once considered joining the Solamnic Knights. He decided against it, however, deciding to follow Majere's teachings. Ulstaff seemed to have almost forgotten about his parents (through repression of the memories) by the time he met Derek Akershaw in Solanthus. They slowly became good friends and Ulstaff often counseled Derek along his path to become a Solamnic knight. After Derek was accepted into the order as a squire, Ulstaff and Derek took up a quest to travel to Palanthis in search of artifacts that had fallen under the control of the Knights of Neraka that were occupying Palanthis. The return of the Gods around this time strengthened Ulstaff's faith and his realization of his destiny as a cleric of the God he had followed since he was young. During their mission the two met up with their soon to be kender friend, Tobias Quickstep. Tobias aided them greatly in the accomplishment of their mission. The three returned to Solanthus, and after Derek was knighted they decided to set out to Kalaman to survey the lands after the eternal darkness had been lifted.

Ulstaff tries with his life to follow the teachings of Majere. He lives by the dogma of Majere when possible but realizes there are exceptions to every rule, but only in appropriate circumstances will he disobey the premise of his god's word. Ulstaff is a generally quiet and introspective individual, though he will never hesitate to counsel those about him with the wisdom his god has afforded him. He will speak out against any evil course of action and has a very strong sense of purpose. He has repressed his memories and does have much pain inside, but only he knows this and he hides it very well. Not all of his quiet introspection is focused on the present.

**Dogma of Majere:** All souls are called to holiness and purity of life. Attainment of this is a mortal's highest calling. Seek holiness both by overcoming the evil within and opening yourself to good. Discipline the unruly passions of the body, and look within to find your own faults and strengths. Seek not glory or perishable things, but eternal joy of light. Obey those properly set above you, and be gentle but firm to those below. Pray always, and always seek the truth. Look to the world around you; in the order of Creation you will find keys to holiness. Help call others to virtue but do so through teaching and example, not force and fear. Oppose evil with fervor, but not with hatred. Show mercy when possible, but be hard when necessary. Above all things have faith. There is an order and purpose to creation, and as long as you do not turn your back on goodness, your life shall not be in vain.