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No Crowns

SERIES PITCH OF THE MONTH



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— Sean Patrick Fannon

Nutshell

Greed, passion, and power plays rule the day when the struggles of democracy and free market capitalism erupt in a high fantasy world of magic and steel.

Characters

You play the figures whose passions and interests determine the fate of the Freelands, residing in its capital, Lanthor. When creating characters, build relationships explaining why they naturally interact with each other in each episode, trumping any boundaries of class and status between them.

Politicians

With no lords of nobility to rule, leadership falls to those who stand up and convince others to let them lead. Talent and charisma, money and influence—these take the place of blood in determining the order of things in the Freelands. You might be:

- mayor of a Lanthorian borough
- a member of the Lanthorian Free Trade Council, conniving and maneuvering for more power
- a high-level operative for the Overlord of Lanthor, seeing to his many plans and schemes
- a temporarily lowly striver destined for great rank

Merchants

The flow of coppers, silver, and gold is the true lifeblood of the Freelands, and the merchants of the region know this as sure as they know the sun will rise. In many ways, they are the true masters of the region, and the level of their mastery is measured by the wealth they control and how they spend it. You might play:

- a greater Guild Master maintaining a lavish home in the great Free City of

Lanthor

- an up-and-coming captain of commerce
- a bureaucrat behind the rising power of the Bank of Lanthor
- someone with a small pouch of gold and dreams of greatness

Freelords

With no king or standing army, protection of the land and its people falls to a small band of brothers and sisters. Their styles, means, and talents differ; only their commitment to a realm without nobles or monarchs unites them. They maintain law and order, and stand against those who would establish the rule of kings.

Those of wealth and power have come to value the Freelords, supplying resources and funding to ensure their mission. With this come inevitable attempts to manipulate the Freelords for personal ends. Will you be one of the noble few who rides and fights to preserve the liberty of the Freelands, or will you be one of the cynical and self-serving, accepting bribes and favors to see to the ends of greedy and ambitious folk?

Priests

The Church of Light brings protection, honor, guidance, and education to all. The Freelands are a realm fertile for the planting of the seeds of faith, and the Church's many emissaries bring the Light and its teachings to all. Temples are being built, and a grand cathedral rises in the skyline of the great Free City of Lanthor. Much of the wealth of the Church of Light can be found in the Freelands, though perhaps not all of it is being put to the purest of uses. You might portray:

- a bishop, enjoying Lanthor's lavish fineries and the Overlord's patronage
- a rising priest using the Church's wealth and influence to further personal goals



- a rising priest using the Church's wealth and influence to further personal goals
- a young missionary or paladin, truly believing in your cause to bring the Light to the land

Druids

Life was here before these lands were called Free, and the Druids are determined to ensure that Life is never forgotten. In the earliest days of struggle, the Druids aided the people in their efforts to claim liberty from all nobles, and they remain stalwart allies to the cause and idea of the Freelands. Yet they see a new form of "nobility" taking root, one that wears jewels and the trappings of conspicuous wealth in place of crowns and coronets, and they try to warn against its dangers. This doesn't endear them to those who enjoy that wealth and power, and a schism grows. Will you be one of the true followers of the Paths of Life, holding firm to the original ideals of the Freelands? Or will you allow the temptations of wealth and affluence to sway you from a lifestyle that may be best left in the past?

Wielders of Magic

Sorcerers grasp the threads of the Patterns to alter reality. Adepts focus spirit and mind to master their environment and the minds of others. Alchemists and artificers unlock the secrets of ancient formulas and mystically-empowered substances to craft items of wonder and potions of power. In a land brimming with wealth and potential, such practitioners easily find patrons willing to fund their efforts, yet they are also called to serve in many different ways. Will you be:

- a master of the Lanthorian Academy, teaching the best and brightest sorcerers
- a member of the vaunted (and greatly feared) Farspeakers Guild, using your powers of the mind to enable communications vital and nefarious
- an alchemist crafting a treasury of potions and items for the power of ambitious people
- a young practitioner, seeking your fortune and your purpose in this odd, exciting, and dangerous land

Pirates, Bandits and Smugglers

The Freelands are a haven for commerce,

with money and resources flowing in massive quantities through the lands and out of the ports. Taxation, fees, and restrictions on certain types of trade make plenty of work for smugglers. The bustling economy creates extraordinary opportunities for bandits and pirates strong and crafty enough to choose the right targets and make off with the loot. Some style themselves as "heroes of the people," undercutting the power and wealth of the elite for the rest of the Freelands, while most are anything but heroes.

Ambassadors

The rest of the world yearns for the wealth and opportunities of the Freelands, even while fearing the chaos and anarchy they see in its strange political system. Ambassadors and emissaries from throughout the Southern Kingdoms and beyond come to the Freelands, seeking ways for the nations or factions they represent to gain the greatest benefit from the realm's treasures. Most reside in the great Free City of Lanthor, attending the court of the Overlord or engaged in meetings with the Free Trade Council or the Guild Masters. Others seek audience with the rising stars of the realm, either outside the Overlord's Inner Keep in the greater part of Lanthor, or out in the other cities and towns of the Freelands.

Spies

Not all who come to the Freelands for the sake of nations or factions do so openly. Many hide their agenda beneath the cloak of doing business, or merely traveling through. Spies are sent to learn the secrets of those in power, or to undermine the power of some in favor of others. Some chip away at the foundation of the Freelands, aiming to send the entire realm crashing down upon itself. Do you:

- serve an enemy faction, determined to harm all of the Freelands teaching the best and brightest sorcerers
- seek to gain advantage for your patrons
- serve the Freelands from the shadows, bearing the mysterious mark of the Black Lanterns

Farmers and Laborers

- As always, it is the people of the land that truly make it what it is. In the Freelands,

all are truly free. They serve for wages, not obligation, and they are able to build a life based on what they wish for themselves and their families. The farmers and workers of the realm hold far more power than even they realize, for those that seek to lead them cannot do so without their consent. Here men and women can choose to change their paths and strive for any goal they desire. Talent and will can carry them to far greater heights than most in other lands could ever dream of.

Will you be:

- a farmhand who yearns for more
- a dockworker who sees the wrong thing and finds himself caught up in circumstances beyond his control
- a young bureaucrat, determined to make the Free City of Lanthor a better place for the common people

Setting

No Crowns takes place in one part of the epic high fantasy realm of Shaintar, a setting designed for traditional RPG play using the Savage Worlds system.

The Freelands occupy a peninsula extending from the main continent's southern end. Its founding charter forbids the rule of hereditary nobles. The people choose the leaders of their individual communities via their own means, usually through election.

Over time, greater coordination and organization became necessary; the largest urban area in the known world, the Free City of Lanthor, became the recognized capital of the Freelands. Its ruler, the Overlord, is the closest thing to a noble the Freelands have, though his authority remains tied to the will of the people. Lanthor is located on the very southern tip of the Freelands peninsula. A great river flows from the north into this gargantuan port city and through it into the sea.

The Overlord is the nominal chairman of both the Lanthorian Free Trade Council (effectively the legislative and judicial body of the Freelands) and the Guild Masters Council (the elite cabal of the masters of the main guilds of Lanthor and, effectively, the Freelands). With his own power, and that of these two

organizations, much of the business of the land is managed from the Free City of Lanthor.

Much, but not all—the growing influence of the Church of Light, the long-standing guardianship of the Freelords, the stubborn will of the Druids, the influences of countless outside factions, and the very people of the Freelands themselves all push and pull at the levers of power.

Themes

- Centralization vs. Decentralization of Power
- Greed and Self-interest vs. the Common Welfare
- Liberty vs. Security
- Honor vs. Ambition
- Power vs. Principle
- Measuring the Quality of Life
- The Good of the State vs. the Good of the World
- The Responsibility of the Maker of Tools Used for Evil

Tightening the Screws

- The Overlord of Lanthor makes moves to become emperor in deed if not in name.
- The Church of Light will do whatever it takes to maintain its hold on power and influence in the Freelands.
- The Druids fear the power of greed and money, and the abandonment of higher principles.
- The Freelords will not tolerate any sign of abandonment of what they've fought and died for.
- The Free Trade Council is falling to infighting and ineffectual operation, too burdened by process and personal agendas.
- The Guild Masters Council enjoys its status, wealth, and power above all else.

Names

Use Anglican and English-friendly Celtic names, such as:

Male

Aherne	Hunno
Albert	Iduthin
Baldwin	Kenrick
Beward	Lynch
Carell	Morgund
Dumnail	Nollaig
Elmer	Oren
Etain	Rian
Finan	Sangus
Godwin	Tor
Graeme	Urien
Harold	Vortigern

Female

Airmed	Gwyna
Aldith	Hida
Averil	Huna
Berenice	Iorwen
Betha	Joan
Cutha	Juliana
Damona	Nesta
Edith	Rora
Esa	Sinna
Fianna	Urith
Gertrude	Wenna

Additional Elements

Participants will benefit greatly by downloading the **free** *Shaintar: Legends Arise Player's Guide*; they need not worry about the game mechanics, but the setting information will be very helpful.

[http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/product/109403/Shaintar%3A-Legends-Arise-\(Players-Guide\)?affiliate_id=41076](http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/product/109403/Shaintar%3A-Legends-Arise-(Players-Guide)?affiliate_id=41076)

Though the setting can be played as all-human, folks might want to incorporate the other races presented, all of whom are represented in the Freelands.