

Story Database Example

This example is from an actual book I worked on – [Hollow & Venom](#) by Amelia MacLeod. She gave me permission to share it. I have included only the first two chapter summaries, but of course in a whole story bible every chapter would be summarized.

You can sign up to her newsletter for a [free copy of the book](#), if you want to read the story!

The idea is that this could become a series story database, where the details of each book would be color-coded. Since this only contains the prequel novel of the series, you'll only see **book 1** represented.

Book Specs

Book 1: *Hollow & Venom*

46,997 words

172 pages

Color Code

Book 2: [Title]

words (ver. #)

pages (ver. #)

Color Code

Book 3: [Title]

words (ver. #)

pages (ver. #)

Color Code

Book 4: [Title]

words (ver. #)

pages (ver. #)

Color Code

Narration Style

- Point(s) of View: third-person limited
- Tense: Simple past
- General Structure Notes: Shifts back and forth between the POV of Neve and Sylvan.

Characters

Main Characters

Neve Iriam [1]

Traits

Physical	Personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rogue human, immune to the thrall since birth due to her royal bloodline (she only learns much later) [2]• Short dark hair [1], chestnut [4]• Olive skin, with freckles across her nose [4]• Green eyes [4]• “Herbal scent she carried with her everywhere” [14]• She has the royal blood line; she takes up her ancestral seat in Silerith once the mages have been sealed back into the Miragelands. [20]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curious, stands her ground, notices things• Deeply desires to be free, defiant• Doesn’t let herself trust easily, or have friends [5]

Relationships

Family	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mother, Ava, lives just outside Sprye Village, but she led Sylvan to believe her mother was dead. Doesn’t want anything to do with her. Hasn’t seen her mother in 5 years after she fled. [14]• Father left twenty years ago; used to say he was born to be the King of Silerith (long-gone human nation). That his great-great-grandparents ruled over the northern country long ago. [14]• Has son Kit with Sylvan, when they settle in Silerith. Kit already shows signs at 2 years old of inheriting all of Sylvan’s powers. [Epilogue]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lydia is her closest “friend” in Vunmore (but doesn’t know her secret)• Comes to have feelings for Prince Sylvan [7]• Meets Darius, the rebel leader, who asked for her help in a rebellion against the mages. [8,15]• Takes up the reign of Silerith territory, and gives sanctuary to the mages who aided in the rebellion, and any other who remained and promised never to use their powers against anyone. [20]

Objects

Clothing	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skirts and bodice [7]• Wears slippers when she’s in Thorne’s chambers and throughout the castle. [11, p. 103]• For the pre-Return vigil, wears expensive gown, silky, low cut, deep green, tight, with restrictive shoes [12]	

Backstory

Vunmore	Childhood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Came to Vunmore about six years ago [1]; rents a garret for cheap, on the outskirts of town. [4] Sleeps in the attic corner. • She's saving up her coins to escape to Etra [1] • Broke into the fortress in search of a shimmerling to sell to the apothecary and get enough coin to be free. [1] After failing that, she thinks to barter passage or stowaway on one of the boats to Etra. [5] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has searched for other unenthralled humans in her travels, but never found anyone else. [5] • Her mother was forced to move them out of the village (because Neve was always crying, never soothed by the shimmerling relics) for fear of being discovered. [3] • No one knows she's immune to the thrall. Her mother traumatized her by letting people test her, selling her blood, saliva, tissue samples for money from people who wanted to experiment and hurt her. [7,10,14] • Neve ran away once she got old enough, from her abusive home situation (5 years ago). [15]

Prince Sylvan Everstone [2]

Traits

Physical	Personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark red hair [2,3] • Pale gray eyes [3], "slate-grey" [7], "storm-gray" [10] • Deep, resonant voice [3] • Confident air, movements "carefully controlled" [10] • Slim, wiry muscles; pale skin, striking features [3] • Faint bruises beneath his eyes, tired looking [10] • Scar: splits the right side of his face, hooking around his cheekbone, then diagonal path to his temple [3] • "Crooked character of his nose" [5] • "Spicy cedarwood" smell [7] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most powerful mage in generations after he returned from the Miragelands. • Nicknamed "Soulslayer," but the mages don't respect him since he's still the 'bastard' prince. [7] • Refuses to enthrall humans or take human lovers, finds the magic abhorrent. [2, 4] Respects human life/freedom, even though he leans into his mask of being a monster. • Everyone simply thinks he disdains humans. [6] • Well practiced at concealing his emotions, believing them to be a weakness and something to be used against him [2]. Control is strength. • Keeps people at arm's length, playing the role of 'monster'. • Considers the king a fool, but later realizes that was a mistake. • No "bedside manner" in knowing what to say. [14] • Used to attacking, not defending (so doesn't often work his shield magic). [16]

Relationships

Family	Other

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older brother is Thorne [2] • King Asperion is not his father; taken in as a 'bastard' child of the queen • Mother, the queen, died 9 years ago (3 years before he was left in the Miragelands) [9] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ She used to be the one who would open the magepool during the Return (royal bloodline). [11] ◦ One of his earliest memories is of her being hopeful as she opened the magepool, smiling. [12] ◦ Taught him and Thorne that how mages treat the humans is wrong. [12] • Marries Neve; they have a son named Kit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flint is his human valet, who slits his wrist using Sylvan's knife in King Asperion's thrall demo. [7] • Takes Neve as his human mistress (their ruse to save her), but really she becomes his ally in overthrowing the mages. • Trusts the half-mage Lady Dahlia with his secrets and helps 'de-thrall' her when she happens to pass too close to a relic. [8]
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Objects

Clothing & Chambers	Magical Powers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps his vial of magepool water (topped with a cork) tied to a loop at his belt, instead of around his neck like the other mages (because he lost his vial when he got left in the Miragelands). • Wears a deep black jacket (unlike the garrish colors of the other mages) at the demo [6] • Carries a knife [6] • Wears gloves [2] • Carries a heavy purse (uses it to book them an night at the Sprye Village Inn) [15] • Chambers are on the second floor of Vunmore Castle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His gift from his time in the Miragelands is being able to wield most powers; most mages can only wield two, and the best of them three. [10] • Originally had only poison-speech. [10] • Lacks healing power. [6] • Used magefire that can burn them from the inside out. [2] Sometimes uses it to create a magefire orb to see by. [14] • His shadow work skill is weaker than Dahlia's. [11] • Shield magic [16] • Air magic – used it to propel Evander away [16] • Neve's blood mixed with his magepool water freed him from Asperion's thrall. [13] • Can release enthrallment by touching the person. Does this with Dahlia on occasion, and uses this power to free the humans caught by Asperion (to get to the dungeon to free Darius). [16]

Backstory

Personal	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returned to Vunmore three years ago [2]; was left in the Miragelands and lost his vial, after a sandstorm blew in as the Amethyst Moon ended. [9,10] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, with his brother, to overthrow the mages and give back the land to the humans. • Intervened with Evander and helped Neve escape. Claims he wants to use her immunity to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survived by finding a cave system, where dangers were fewer in the barren land. [10] His magic still feels unwieldy, even after six years of commanding it, but he relishes it. [2] His armor has been built up around his mother's death 9 years ago [2]. Hardening himself into a 'monster'; buries his grief by leaving it to rot in his chest. [12] Tamps down his trauma from surviving the monsters and horrors of the Miragelands. [6] 	<p>help him banish the mages from the Vales. Invited her to be his ally. [7-8]</p>
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Prince Thorne [2]

Traits

Physical	Personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad-shouldered and strong from sword practice, strong jaw Golden hair [2], "sun-kissed" [4] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not great at hiding his emotions, "moves like a restless animal" (p. 94) "Typical air of casual disinterest" [6] "Too-loud laugh that he has no idea betrays his nerves" [12] Buries his grief over his mother by pushing it outward, by seeking physical comfort, with women, with sword training. [12]

Relationships

Family	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Younger brother is Sylvan Heir to King Asperion, his father Mother was queen before she died 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flirts with Dahlia Relentless dalliances, often enjoying many woman in his bed at once. [2]

Objects

Clothing	Magic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> His chambers are in the west tower. [2] Clothing brushed down and free of wrinkles, shoes polished [2] Wears vial of magepool water around his neck [2] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> His blood opens the magepool (and his mother's before him), not Asperion's. [12] Magefire [13]

Backstory

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near weekly assassination attempts against him [2]; Asperion had been trying to kill his son [13] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kills his father, Asperion, at the magepool. Plunges the king's dagger into his heart. [20] Doesn't keep human servants [2]
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His mother approached the task of opening the pool with reverence, pricking her finger with a sewing needle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plotting to assassinate the king with Sylvan, and oust the mages.
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King Asperion [2]

Traits

Physical	Personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden hair, “tangled mess,” bald spot on the back of his skull [4] • Smells of strong (spicy) cologne and stale tobacco [4] • Killed by his son Thorne, with his own dagger to the heart, then his body is pushed into the magepool. [20] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A fool in a crown” [2], thought to be distractible, prone to drunkenness and buffoonery [9], but Sylvan later learns he made himself into someone easily dismissed. • Not a kind man; cruel towards humans [9] • Pretends to be bumbling and clumsy, but he’s strong in poison-speech and keeps all humans in Vunmore enthralled. • “Alarming talent for acting and subterfuge” [9] • His goal is to control everywhere with magic, get Thorne to open the magepool for him to go into the Miragelands and charge his magic with unending power, then return to mold the Vales as he wished. [18]

Relationships

Family	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prince Thorne is his only “true” heir [2]; later the king tries to have him assassinated [13] • Sylvan is his “bastard” son 	

Objects

Clothing	Magic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal clothing for party: Golden yellow coat, bright purple buttons, tassels on each sleeve, carrying a fat clay cask [4] • During demo in courtyard: Golden circlet, with thin bands of intertwining gold; the crown he wears for action, not a typical crown to greet one’s subjects [5] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental approach to magic; develops new uses for powers; his “little projects” supposedly keep him busy. [13] • His powerful poison-speech personally keeps most of the humans in the realm enthralled by imbuing his powers into relics. [4] • He learns how to enthrall mages; enthralls Sylvan as he tries to assassinate the king. [13] • Uses another mage’s magic to erect a shield around the dungeons, and Sylvan is blocked from traveling there. [16]

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He deeply entralls everyone in town, humans and mages that attended the ball, but he can't control them all perfectly at once. [17]
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Backstory

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to Sylvan, Asperion fancies himself a scholar, spending loads of time tinkering with magic, to no real success, in his so-called laboratory than governing. He underestimates him. [6] • Dahlia, Thorne, and Sylvan have given him the nickname "Asp" after the snake. [11] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathers donated magepool water from all mages present at the festival opening, telling them that it would help him restore their people's magic without needing to face the Miragelands. It was really to be exploited and be able to use poison-speech on mages. [13] • Can't open the pool without Thorne's royal blood.
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Darius [8,11]

Installs a monastery at the site of the magepool, an order of guards called Poisonkeepers trained to watch for any sign of trouble

Traits

Physical	Personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immune to the thrall like Neve (due to his royal bloodline), claims to be descended of kings. [15] • Long, light-brown hair streaked with blond, tied back with a string. [8] • Thin, bold, sharp nose [8] • Later, after being tortured by Asperion, left eye nearly swollen shut, the bruise on his cheek extending across his forehead to the hairline. He has a nasty cut close to the corner of his eye. [17] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of the human rebellion. Rules over Aglye once the mages have been banished back. [20]

Relationships

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks Neve to join him in their rebellion to oust the mages. • Claims to know one other human immune to the thrall (the Etran royal, we later learn whose blood they use, along with Darius, Neve, and Sylvan's, to seal the magepool). • Nearly all humans in Vunmore are part of the rebellion and consider him their king. [17] • Founder of the Poisonkeepers order. [Epilogue]

Objects

Clothing	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	

Backstory

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Claims his ancestors were kings once, in the Vales centuries ago. [8]• Was waiting outside her door the night she let out the shimmerlings. Knows where she lives, her name, and can get into the fortress gardens. [8]• Doesn't know what Neve knows: that there are mages who want to help humans. [11]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• He believes Sylvan has taken Neve as his whore (doesn't know it's a ruse).• Is eventually captured by Asperion and trapped in the castle dungeons. Sylvan and Neve go to rescue him. [16]
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Side Characters

Lydia [2]

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apothecary. Works at Tea & Tinctures. Mint grows in abundance, but she likes all hot drinks; has a rooftop garden. [5]• Neve runs errands and deliveries for her occasionally; is her assistant in the shop and they are somewhat close.• Grey hair; ample shape; "kind, cranky, brilliant" [5]• Doesn't know Neve's secret. [5]• Offers to let Neve stay in the spare room at the apothecary, delivering packages at her usual rate. [5] When Neve snaps the shimmerling bones above the door, Lydia gives her food and blankets to make her escape. [5]• Among the hoard of deeply enthralled humans at Asperion's control. [15,16]
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Evander [1,3]

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poison-speaking mage. Very cruel to humans.• Straw-yellow hair, like a hard cap.• Enjoys torturing his human "pets." [1] His level of sadism, according to Sylvan, is uncommon.• Catches Neve as she lets out the shimmerlings.• Sylvan thinks he's fishy and wonders if he might have something to do with Thorne's latest assassination attempt. [4]
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Fern [4]

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attended the ball with Evander, clad in green.• Chestnut hair, thick curls in intricate design of braids and loops, pale skin. [8]• Mean to Neve in the gardens. Looks down on Dahlia as an outsider.• Green-speaking magic [16] – Asperion uses it to launch vines to trip Sylvan/Neve in the courtyard.
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Flint [2]

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sylvan's human valet, kept unenthralled. [2] Paid well for his work. Seems to enjoy sadistic tasks.• Older man who wears spectacles on the end of his long nose. [2]• Bushy eyebrows [2]; dark bruise on his cheek (after being enthralled by the king) [6]• Allied with Thorne and Sylvan in their plans to overthrow the mages [6]• Caught by Asperion and severely injured in the king's deep enthrallment demo to other mages (in the courtyard). When Sylvan pushes him outside the magic circle, Flint was compelled to slit his own wrists. [7]• Sylvan had him removed to a healer's inn in the lower city and he survived. [9]• Sylvan sent Flint's family a lot of coin afterwards. [9]
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Late Queen

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mother of Thorne and Sylvan• Died 9 years ago• Wanted to change things; thought the power to enthrall was a corruption used for ill gains once mages arrived in the Vales (that it might have perhaps once been used to speak to animals or some other good cause). [14]• Used to be the one who opened the magepool; then it was up to Thorne's royal blood after she died.
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Lady Dahlia Ammond [8]

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Half-mage (a secret nobody knows about except Sylvan); dark hair. [8]• Susceptible to the thrall; comes to Sylvan so he can break any thrall put upon her when she occasionally passes to close to a relic. [8]• Sylvan trusts her. She helps train Neve to survive life in the castle.• Flirts with Prince Thorne, who tries to ignore her but clearly likes her• Magic skill: "shadow work"; can smooth or lengthen shadows, dowsing the light. [11]• Superior to it than Sylvan. Uses it to fight Asperion in the human castle ruins. [13]• She was with Lord Ammond two years ago. He is now gone. [8]• Fern and the other women mages of the court treat her as an outsider. [8]• Invites instant familiarity.• Hates the mages and wants to banish them all. [11]
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Ava [14]

Notable Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neve's "eccentric" fortune-teller mother; tall, willowy, long hair hanging loose around shoulders, green eyes, wears rings [14]• Lives in a cottage on the outskirts of Sprye Village• Hasn't seen her daughter Neve in 5 years, but didn't seem to have searched for her at all. [14]
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pretends to communicate with sprites; “puts on a good show for her customers;” charms everyone she meets [14]• Has a crystal ball in the center of her table for her “trade”• Might have a touch of something like “future-casting,” (thinks Sylvan) which nobody really has. [14]
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Walk-On Characters

Tortured human man and woman: Eating hot coals for the amusement of a bored mage, Evander. [1] Afterward, Prince Thorne sent them to be healed. [4]

Woman carrying four heavy baskets [1]: piled high with apples, oranges, pears. No cart. She has grey hair, fake smile, dress hanging off her, shoes worn with holes. Neve helps

her carry her baskets. The woman thinks she may have detained a prince's servant, when Neve asks directions to the west tower.

Mage not enthralled [16]: Didn't attend Asperion's ball. Nervous tick in his jaw. Throws away his vial after Sylvan tells him to, and runs off to tell any other aware mages.

Other Names Mentioned

Jessa and Kael [6]: Courtiers from a woodland estate in the south of Vunmore. Invited by Asperion for his deep enthrallment demonstration. Dahlia / Thorne ride to them to inform them of Asperion's deceit. [14]

Charlie [14]: A man in Sprye Village that Ava mentions came to visit her. He's getting skinny but stubbornly resists seeing a healer.

Places

VALES

Made up of former three human kingdoms: Etra (island), Aglye, and Silerith (which make up the mainland). Mages, who came from the Miragelands originally, have subdued and kept enthralled most of the human population, except Neve and a few others who are immune (due to their royal blood lines).

At the end of book 1, Neve takes up her ancestral seat in Silerith (and offers sanctuary to the mages who helped in the rebellion), Darius in Aglye, and the borders are redrawn as they once were for the human kingdoms. [20]

Aglye

Mainland continent. Beyond the capital city of Vunmore are country villages.

Vunmore [1]

Capital city of Aglye. They hold a festival every three years – usually with fireworks, lots of prep the humans do, the point is to pass out recharged shimmerling relics to keep the thrall going. Humans in the city are oppressed by the mages. Poisonkeepers squads keep close watch on the human population.

- **City proper**

- Festival banners droop between rooftops, mage-lit candles on every ledge. [4]
- Near the castle the cobblestone streets are wide, but grow narrower and buildings more slanted as you move away. Smells of pine buildings, woodsmoke, and baking bread. [5]

- Upper levels of the city divided into predominantly human neighborhoods and mage-dominated neighborhoods. [16]
- **Tea & Tinctures** [5]
 - Apothecary shop in Vunmore owned by [Lydia](#), with teacups painted on the glass windows
 - White-painted sign with name of shop on it
 - Rooftop garden where herbs are grown
 - Mainly mint tea, but brews all sorts of tea
 - Bouquet of shimmering bones tied with a ribbon, mounted above the door
 - Front door has glass panels
- **Castle fortress** [1]
 - Smells like burnt sugar because of all the festival baking [1]
 - Remains warm and comfortable year-round, and roses bloom in the gardens
 - Outer walls [1] house an expansive courtyard with dark-wood balconies that extend from the upper floors of the interior walls [1]. Flower garlands hang from balconies and candles set above each alcove for the festival. [6]
 - Cobblestones in interior halls [1], hexagonal antechamber (filled with tables loaded with flowers and food) in interior halls that branches into a trio of corridors.
 - Baskets of fruit and break piled high along the walls for the festival. [16]
 - More paintings than wall hangings, most of them landscapes. Many torches dot the walls, and there are many windows. [7]
 - All humans working there have a master. [3]
 - Has dungeons
 - Secret hallway in the tower stairwell toward the throne room. Loose stone near the floor reveals a narrow stone staircase that ends in an underground passage, leading toward the ancient part of the fortress. [12]

Gardens

- Stone archway separates the grounds from the interior
- Blooming roses on the back wall of the garden, growing on trellises
- Overgrown honeysuckle near the fountain [11]
- Foliage thickens until the stepping-stone paths peters out. Sylvan knows of a unguarded door (iron set in stone wall) beneath the hanging ivy [3]
- Enormous flower blossoms on every tree bend the branches towards the meandering brick paths, which peter into stepping stones approaching the outer walls. [8]
- Behind a hedge near the back is a three-tiered black fountain (where Neve meets Darius twice) [8, 11]
- Air laced with heady scent of lilies and lavender and roses along the back-wall trellises [11]
- Torches burn along the paths [11]

Prince Thorne's tower/chamber [2]

- Sylvan performs the interrogation of the assassin in this tower. [2]

- In the west tower, arched window, cushioned settee in the corner. There's a fire in the grate, with an armchair in front. Bookshelf along the wall.
- The west tower is up a stone staircase with uneven steps. Candles on the wall appear as you go. The doorways are iron.

Sylvan's chambers [7]

- On second floor, has a spacious sitting room and a separate bedroom. Neve takes a bath in the sitting room (magic keeps the water hot). Cabinet on the far wall with a wine decanter. [7]

Ballroom [4]

- Decked out for the festival. Shades of black and red, crimson streamers, fog along the floor up to their knees.
- Sugar sculptures of wraiths and demons (representing the Miragelands)
- Tables and settees for guests, mountains of refreshments
- The king brought the music players in from Riles

Dining room [11]

- Ostentatious and full of excess, made up for the pre-Return vigil
- Floor is red-and-gold checked pattern
- Dining table and chairs adorned with sculpted protruding thorns
- Talon-shaped legs of the clock on the mantel
- Black candlesticks on the table, blood-red tapers within them
- Veranda outside

Human castle – underground passage

- Hidden underground area where Thorne and Asperion are meant to keep vigil before the Return
- It's the ruins of the human castle, from before the time of the mages
- Walls shaped into low shelves
- The remains of a stone table in the corner and a brightly painted fresco
- Holes in the walls might have held candle sconces
- Broken floor tiles may have been a colorful mosaic

Darius' cell [17]

- Impenetrable tower; halfway up the tower is a wooden door, inside are a pair of enthralled mages guarding a second door leading to a cell. [17]
- Plain stone floor, no cot, no blanket, not even straw.
- Grated drain in the center of the room

• ***Magepool*** [18]

- Hidden deep in an ancient forest in a grove of trees, not far from the sea (touch of brine on the air)
- Spongy, uneven ground, thick moss and leaves from centuries of rotting trees
- Thick canopies block out nearly all sun
- Overgrown circle of stone, barely noticeable
- Air feels thick and charged, with magic

- Pool itself is a pupil-black circle of water set within a stone basin, impossible to gauge the depth; no reflection, no ripples

Sprye Village [14]

Where Neve's mother lives, in a cottage on the outskirts, within walking distance. Three days' horse ride from Vunmore.

Narrow buildings around a dirt road, mishmash of wood and stone, open slits for windows; rickety porches, small gardens, smell of horses like any small village

• *Ava's cottage* [14]

- Walkway leads to up to the cottage
- Room packed, floor to ceiling, with fortune-telling accoutrements
- Assortment of glass spheres on the floor along one wall, ranging in size
- Corner shelf stacked with cards, some hand drawn, others painted
- Gauzy material hangs from the walls, dyed in purples, greens, and blues
- Table with crystal ball at its center for her fortune telling trade

• *Inn* [15]

- Sylvan books him and Neve the large guest room, with a bed, a chair, and a lit hearth
- Proprietor behind the counter when they get there
- Simple, clean wool blankets, which Neve uses to dry off from the rain storm
- Scent of cedar and rain and wool

Silerith

Neve takes back her ancestral place as queen of Silerith in the mountains. She and Sylvan live in the castle, and every month more and more Sil people are settling around the castle; it's practically becoming a town. The remaining mages' magic helps make the surrounding land fertile and harvests abundant.

[Epilogue]

Etran Islands

Remote island nation ruled by queens.

Riles

Capital of Etra. Across the sea from [Vunmore](#).

MIRAGELANDS

Original home to the mages, now a barren wasteland. They conquered the Vales from the humans around 300 years ago.

- Every three years, the mages venture into the Miragelands to recharge/retain their magic.
- The humans don't know this, thinking they just stay in the castle the whole time. [7]
- The Amethyst Moon heralds the Return of the mages to the Vales.

Other Places Mentioned

Healers' Inn [11]: Top-tier inn for ailing nobility, where Sylvan sent Flint to recover from his “self-inflicted” wounds. Run by a couple who have been allies to the rebel mages' cause: part of a network helping humans to escape the city for years.

Organizations

Clade/Race

Humans: Enthralled servants of mages (some consider humans their ‘pets’). They do all the festival prep. Don't wield magic. [1] They wear drab clothing compared to the garish excess of the mages. [6] King Asperion's strong poison-speech keeps most humans in Vunmore enthralled.

Mages: Tyrannical rulers who can enthrall humans to their will with magic. They wear garrish clothing compared to humans. They live everywhere in the Vales, but they mainly like bigger cities. [1] They are far fewer than humans, so mainly prefer the amusements of cities. Elsewhere, humans lives fairly freely. Wear vials of sacred magepool water around their necks (which ties them to their home world) and every three years must return to the Miragelands to refresh their powers. [2]

Half mages [8]: [Lady Dahlia](#) is an example. She keeps her human blood a secret. Susceptible to the thrall.

Bestiary

Shimmerling [1]: Small lizard-like creatures native to the Vales but rare now. They are slaughtered during the festival in a blaze of magefire, their bones enchanted to create relics that will maintain the mages' hold over humans throughout the Vales. No longer than an index finger, but they move fast. [1] Variety of iridescent colors.

Wraith [4]: Creatures of the Miragelands.

Sprites [14]: Ava, Neve's mother, pretends to communicate with sprites, although most mages don't think such creatures existed in the Vales or the Miragelands.

Beliefs, Systems, Laws, and Rules

The Return [4,6]

- The festival, which happens every three years, is the mages' way of handing out recharged relics, since the thrall doesn't last forever. [1]
- Shimmerlings are sacrificed in magefire, and the prince corrupts the bones with a spell to renew the thrall over the Vales. [1]

- Every three years, mages over 12 years old must venture into the Miragelands and return. They must endure the brutality of the Miragelands in order to maintain/recharge their powers. If they choose to forgo it, they will sacrifice their powers.
- The final day before The Return is the Amethyst Moon.

Types of Mage Magic

- **Air magic** [16]: commanding the wind; also hardened air where a captive can't twitch a finger. The magic can even smother breath, if the mage so wishes. Used by Sylvan in his torture campaign at the beginning of book 1.
- **Auras**: All mages have them and they shift at the edges when they perform magic. Some mages can learn to hide the signs. [3]
- **Blood magic** [18]: Sylvan's botched assassination attempt of Asperion would have used this power.
- **Deep enthrallment**: Telltale sign of deep enthrallment in humans is glassed-over eyes. Only useful to destroy all autonomy in a human, which Asperion does to take over the whole city, even certain mages with their magepool water. [6]
- **Green-speech** [16]: Fern has it; Asperion uses it against Sylvan via tripping vines.
- **Magefire**
- **Magepool water**: Ties the mages to their home world (the Miragelands) and they typically carry it in a vial around their neck. [2]
- **Poison-speech** [3]: Power that some, but not all, mages use to enthrall humans to their will. Those with this power are called poison-speakers (wear black uniforms [5]). Has no effect on mages (or so they believe), therefore is useless in the Miragelands.
- **Shimmerling relics**: (made of their bones) Keep humans docile when mages are absent. They are handed around during the festival, which happens every three years. The thrall doesn't last forever and needs to be recharged. [1]
- **Throwing up shields** [16]: Protects against knives, swords, fists, magefire [16]
- **Traveling great distances**: Sylvan pushes through the aether and can travel to any place he wants (that isn't shielded).

Rules of Enthrallment

- Poison-speech is used to enthrall humans to the mage's will. It fades when the mage is away from them, hence the use of shimmerling relics to keep them lethargic.
- Mages must venture to the Miragelands once every three years to renew their powers.
- Poison-speaking magic can sometimes be used to override the magic of a human's master. [3]
- Sylvan's magic is so strong that his humans are never corruptible by other mages (if he had any servants). [3]
- Humans who destroy the relics, which temporarily halt the enthrallment, get sent to the dungeon. [5]
- Commonly thought that mages could only wield two powers at most. [10]
- Blood from the royal line of the mages opens the magepool for the journey between realms. [12]
- Mages can't be enthralled; however, King Asperion somehow acquires the power and enthralls Sylvan, which means he can control his powers too. [12,13]
- Neve's immune blood mixed with a mage's vial of magepool water will cancel out the enthrallment. [13]
- Royal blood makes humans immune to the thrall (like Neve and Darius) [17]
- Three royal's blood (from each of the three human kingdoms) will allow humans to seal the mages back in the Miragelands. [17]

Legends

- The original mage world, the Miragelands, has been made an unlivable wasteland. [7] They conquered the Vales around 300 years ago, set up the Vunmore fortress over the ruins of a human castle.
- Neve says that she and Darius are likely descended of royal lines, and believes their Vales blood can seal the magepool, just like Thorne's can open it. [15]

Immunity Experiments – Neve, Sylvan, Thorne, Flint [11]

Neve consents to experiments to figure out how to share her immunity with an enthralled Flint (and none work, sadly):

- Holding Flint's hand, mingling their blood (slashes across her palm), kissing him
- Giving Flint locks of her hair, handkerchiefs, whispering instructions in his ear to counter, waking in the night to try it all under the waxing moon
- During battle, Neve realizes if she mixes her blood with Sylvan's magepool water, that it will release Asperion's thrall. [13]

Vocabulary

aether [16]: Sylvan reaches into it as he travels great distances

Amethyst Moon [10]: Window of time mages use to journey between worlds, when the moon looks purple within the Vales

Asp: Nickname given to King Asperion by Thorne/Sylvan/Dahlia

aura [2]: Visible energy around mages

hollows [1]: Mage name for humans

magefire [2]: Mage magic

Miragelands [4, 10]: Mage homeland that they rendered a wasteland; vacated centuries ago to invade the Vales and enthrall human population

pre-Return vigil [11]: A time of contemplation meant to be undertaken by the one who

Sil: Inhabitants of the human kingdom Silerith

Soulslayer: Nickname given to Prince Sylvan

The Return [4]: Every mage over the age of 12 must go into the Miragelands and return, every three years

Thrall [1]: Power the mages exert over the humans to control them; also called being enthralled; enthrallment

ward/wardings [1]: spells would open the magepool; but now King Asperion has turned it into a party

Timeline

300 years ago [12]: The mages lived in the Miragelands. Eventually left once it was depleted and conquered the Vales and conquered the human population.

20 years ago: Neve's father left, never to be seen again. [14]

9 years ago, from chapter 1 [9]: Sylvan's mother died in the Miragelands (three years before Sylvan was abandoned in the Miragelands, ch. 10, p. 98).

6 years ago, from chapter 1 [1]: Neve came to Vunmore, about the time Sylvan, the "Soulslayer" prince, disappeared (p. 8). He was abandoned in the Miragelands after a sandstorm, and found a way to survive the three years there.

3 years ago, from chapter 1 [1]: Sylvan reappeared, the most powerful mage in generations. Bears a deep scar on his face. He acquired nearly all the mage powers, except healing.

STORY START: Tomorrow, from chapter 1: Neve vows to quit Vunmore for the coast of Etra. This evening goes to free the shimmerlings from the castle. Meets Sylvan. It's the start of the festival, which ends in the Return.

Next 10 days of the festival, from chapter 4 [5]: After the festival is over, mages will venture into the Miragelands (the Return).

7 days until the Return, from chapter 9 (p. 90)

6 days out – Sylvan, Thorne, Flint, Neve trying everything of experiment to figure out her immunity, but to no avail.

3 days until the Amethyst Moon (and the Return), from chapter 11 – moon is almost full [14]

Day before Amethyst Moon – Sylvan tries to assassinate King Asperion and fails

Onset of the Amethyst Moon – Chapter 16, human rebellion goes down, the mages are eventually sent back to the Miragelands and the humans are freed.

Summaries

Book 1: Hollow & Venom

Chapter 1

Neve ventures into the mage fortress in Vunmore to steal a shimmerling to sell to Lydia, the apothecary, so she can quickly amass enough coin to get out of the city, and go to the Etran Islands, to be near the ocean and be free. The humans are preparing the fortress for the coming festival. When she gets to the west tower, however, she frees all the creatures, but not before being caught by a mage who enters the room.

Chapter 2

Sylvan interrogates, and then violently murders via magefire, the most recent assassin sent to kill his brother, Prince Thorne. When they're done, they realize the shimmerlings have been let loose.