

VIOLET DAWN  
THE TIME OF THE UNRAVELLING

# THE BROKEN ISLES



PLAYER'S GUIDE



*“Enemies make you stronger, allies make you weaker.”*  
– Frank Herbert

# THE BROKEN ISLES

## CREDITS

### PROJECT MANAGER · ART DIRECTOR

Jeffrey J. Visgaitis

### FREELANCE COORDINATOR · ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

Robert J. Gallagher

### Authors

Alexander M. Freed  
Jeffrey J. Visgaitis

### Additional Design

C. D. Bennett  
Robert J. Gallagher  
Michael M. Mumich  
Jason Rosenstock

### Line Editor

Alexander M. Freed

### Interior Artists

Jason Brunner • James Byrd  
Ramon Contini • Robert J. Gallagher  
Michael Komarck • Khang Le  
Michael A. Mumich • Aaron Norell  
Tony Parker • Jason Rosenstock  
Mack Sztaba • Mathias Tapias

### Cartography

Jeffrey J. Visgaitis

### Layout & Typesetting

Jeffrey J. Visgaitis

### Cover Artists

Khang Le  
Jason Rosenstock

### Violet Dawn Logo

Jeffrey J. Visgaitis

### D20 Guru

Alexander M. Freed

The Inner Circle  
779 McKinley Street  
Hazleton, PA 18201-2738  
570.956.4149



Visit us online at:  
[www.icirclegames.com](http://www.icirclegames.com)  
[www.violetdawn.com](http://www.violetdawn.com)  
[orders@icirclegames.com](mailto:orders@icirclegames.com)

# PREFACE

## PROLOGUE: CHOOSING DESTINY

**Y**ou were born in the Broken Isles, and in all likelihood you are destined to die here.

Each day, you watch the twin suns pass over the island of Korr, until the twin moons replace them each night. You see the mountains to the north, legendary in their peril. You see the forested hills of the midlands, thick with beasts. You see the plains of the south, lush and exposed. You see the homes of the human tribes—the Great Mesa of the Inuls, the Southern Swamp of the Kurs, the Cleft of the Naruks, and the Dhargon Coast of the Azghars.

You've heard your elders tell stories. You've heard the tale of the terrible, nameless god who fell to the ocean, whose corpse formed the isles; the tale of that same god giving birth to the skarren, and to many of the monsters that lurk below the ground. You've heard the tale of the One Tribe, that first human civilization from which the four tribes are descended—that ancient people of spears and spells, who buried their power in temples and tombs.

You've witnessed magic. You're aware that in the ages since the One Tribe, humans learned to fear magic and place it in the hands of shamans. Not so with the other races: Magic escapes the grasp of the skarren, and zeidians shun its power. Only the ngakoi wield magic freely, by turns impure and incorruptible.

And you know the way of things in the present day. You know the tribes are at peace, and that peace never lasts. You know that foreigners arrive from across the western ocean, led by the strange vulnar traders. You know they bring tales of glorious cities and empires. You do not know whether to believe them.

You know who you are. You know your world is changing.

You know it is time to choose your role.

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Player's Guide to the Broken Isles*. This book is your starting point for the Broken Isles campaign—a standalone d20 System game set within the world of Violet Dawn, intended for characters of levels 1 through 5. If you're a player, you'll find everything you need to create new PCs ready for adventure in the archipelago. If

you're a DM, you'll also want to look through the *Lorebook of the Broken Isles*, this book's companion volume. Both players and DMs are advised to browse the Broken Isles website at <http://www.thebrokenisles.com>.

Whether you're seeking a full-fledged introduction to Avadnu, a brief vacation from your usual stomping grounds, or just a few rules and setting elements to cherry-pick for your home campaign, we hope you'll find what you're looking for here.

This book is divided into five chapters, as follows:

**Races:** New races available for use in character creation.

**Tribes:** The four great human tribes.

**Classes:** The roles the base classes play in the isles.

**Feats:** New feats available in the Broken Isles.

**Equipment:** Weapons, armor, equipment, and special materials used in the isles.

## ♦ ♦ ABOUT VIOLET DAWN ♦ ♦

Violet Dawn is the setting of the world of Avadnu. The Broken Isles are one small part of this world—specifically, they're a small chain of islands on the eastern coast of the continent of Kaelandar. The isles are a place where the ancient empires and decaying cultures so common elsewhere have been stripped down to their basic, savage core; a place where little is known of lands beyond the horizon, where myth is more powerful than history.

In other words, a perfect place for introductions.

As a game product, *The Broken Isles* also acts as a preview of *The Avadnu Primer*. This forthcoming book details a far larger portion of the world, covering a great variety of cultures, landscapes, and religions. In the *Primer*, you'll find new playable races, a new core class, and dozens of new feats and pieces of equipment.

You can find out much more about Violet Dawn at the Inner Circle website at <http://www.icirclegames.com>. You may also want to look at two other websites: <http://www.violetdawn.com> contains an overview of Avadnu generally, while <http://www.thebrokenisles.com> contains additional support for this product.

# CLASSES

With the exception of the cleric, all character classes from the Player's Handbook are suitable for use in a Broken Isles campaign. This chapter describes the role of each class in the cultures of the archipelago, along with rules adjustments and new options for certain classes. In some cases, rules changes are limited to the first five levels of a class; advanced revisions are described in *The Avadnu Primer*.

## TRIBAL SHAMANS

Among the tribes, druids, sorcerers, and wizards are almost always considered shamans. The

details of a shaman's role varies from tribe to tribe and from person to person, but the essence of the position is acting as the tribe's emissary to the magical world. A shaman confronts and controls the mystic forces ordinary tribespeople fear; a shaman learns the secrets no ordinary tribesperson may know.

A tribe typically has no more than one shaman for each of its major communities or settlements; often, a tribe has fewer. A shaman may be a kindly elder who lives alongside his kin, offering healing and divination to any who ask. A shaman may be a frightening presence who lives at the outskirts of a settlement, emerging from her hut only when black magic threatens her home. Many shamans collect magic items that their tribes find, locking them safely away until they are absolutely needed.

A shaman may be replaced in one of two ways. Ordinarily, a shaman trains her own successor, taking in a child at a young age and bequeathing whatever secrets she possesses. Less frequently, a tribesperson develops magical abilities on his own, and either challenges the shaman in a duel for the title or is taken in by the shaman as an apprentice. A shaman may have multiple apprentices at any given time, and these individuals are often sent away on tasks the shaman can't spare the time or magic to perform.

Human druid, sorcerer, and wizard PCs will commonly be shamans' apprentices. As such, they fulfill the role of the shaman away from the tribe, providing much-needed magical aid to others or leading the way to terrible arcane threats. A human spellcaster who is not apprenticed to a shaman is most likely an exile—taking up



the role of shaman is the responsibility of any tribesperson with magical talent, and a person who refuses the responsibility is as feared as any wild magic. However, an exiled spellcaster may fit right in with the diverse characters found in a Broken Isles campaign....

## BARBARIAN

Skarren epitomize the barbarian way of life, reveling in harsh battles and never fearing death. Over the ages, many humans have sought to emulate skarren ferocity, adapting the barbarian's rage to suit their own struggles. Azghar and Naruk warriors are particularly drawn to the path of the barbarian, and many Azghar stories tell of mighty chieftains who suffered mortal wounds without falling. Even zeidians—ordinarily measured and controlled combatants—occasionally follow the way of the barbarian, giving in to wild urges after long periods of isolation or training against skarren and Azghars.

## BARD

Written language is rare in the Broken Isles, and literacy is the near-exclusive province of Inuls and zeidians. Therefore, as keepers of oral history, bards are of the utmost importance. They pass knowledge and myth from generation to generation through stories and song, maintaining the peoples' lore. Some bardic warriors rise to great fame as wielders of weapons and magic, and every tribe has at least one legend of such a hero. Bards are greatly respected, and can exert enormous influence over tribal leaders—even shamans, who may see them as brothers or rivals. A select few zeidian bards catalog the history of the isles on hidden scrolls, and skarren bards speed the blood of their kin by echoing the cries of their divine forbearer.

**Rules:** Bards on Avadnu can be of any alignment. They also gain access to an extra bardic music effect at 3rd level:

*Song of Recuperation (Su):* A bard of 3rd level or higher with 6 or more ranks in a Perform skill can use his music or poetics to increase the value of rest. Allies within 30 feet who can see and hear the bard and who spend the hour following the song resting and undertaking no significant activity (such as combat or spellcasting) gain the benefits of a full night's rest for the purposes of healing hit points and ability damage (but not ability burn). Allies whose rest is interrupted gain no benefit.

## CLERIC

By default, Violet Dawn campaigns are assumed to contain no clerics. The gods of Avadnu rarely interact with mortals, both out of choice and due to interference from planar barriers. Further information is available in *The Avadnu Primer*.

## DRUID

The primal forces of nature are feared and respected by islanders, and those who can channel such forces are feared and respected in turn. Druids are never trained; instead, they believe they are chosen. At the time of their calling, they develop a bond with nature and learn to identify plants and animals by sight. Human druids are nearly always shamans, and act as advisors, spiritual leaders, and healers. Those who refuse the path of the shaman often become recluses, living as hermits in the wilderness. Although all tribes have produced druids, the greatest druids have traditionally been Inuls, with Naruks a close second. Skarren druids are few, but seen as destined for accomplishment.

**Rules:** Upon reaching level 4, a druid can accelerate a creature's natural healing process once per day as a standard action. The druid must touch the creature and choose how many days' worth of rest the creature receives (to a maximum of the druid's Wisdom bonus). An unwilling

### ◆ SUMMON NATURE'S ALLY ◆

As normal, druids in the Broken Isles can spontaneously cast *summon nature's ally* spells. The following are revised summoning lists for *summon nature's ally I, II, and III*. Revised lists for higher-level versions of the spell are available in *Denizens of Avadnu* and *The Avadnu Primer*.

*Summon Nature's Ally I:* Summonable creatures are deep bat, dire rat, dweller, hexachela, jorim, octopus, and snake (Small viper).

*Summon Nature's Ally II:* Summonable creatures are braershoot, dire bat, elemental (Small, any), gorg, kehtor, ort, snake (Medium viper), and squid.

*Summon Nature's Ally III:* Summonable creatures are glamwing, grethell, naryd grub, ranzeptera, snake (constrictor), snake (Large viper), and yethil.



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# VIOLET DAWN™

THE TIME OF THE UNRAVELLING

## Welcome to the Broken Isles . . .

From the creators of the award-nominated Denizens of Avadnu comes the first in-depth look at the world of Violet Dawn. On a group of mysterious islands isolated from the mainland of Kaelandar, primitive humans struggle for survival. They count among their enemies a dangerous and bizarre environment, inhuman slavers from beyond the sea, horrid monsters, buried magic, and—of course—one another. Together with barbarous skarren, moon-blessed zeidians, and adaptive ngakoi, these humans desperately contend with the secrets of their strange land.

The Player's Guide to the Broken Isles contains everything you need to create a character and learn about the various races, tribes, and classes of The Broken Isles. The Player's Guide is illustrated in full color and is 39 pages in length. The PDF is extensively bookmarked for ease of use, and a printer-friendly version is also included. The Player's Guide contains 3 exciting new PC races, variant rules for the core classes, more than 25 new feats, 20 new pieces of equipment, and new rules for weapons made of inferior materials such as bone, wood, and stone.

The Broken Isles product line is a standalone mini-campaign setting designed to ease players and DMs into the world of Violet Dawn. The Broken Isles is focused on play from 1st to 5th level, building PCs' knowledge and experience until they're prepared to face the wider world of Avadnu (as described in the upcoming Avadnu Primer).

A dedicated website at [www.thebrokenisles.com](http://www.thebrokenisles.com) offers additional content such as design notes from the creators, an artwork gallery, pregenerated characters, adventure hooks, maps, and more!

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product utilizes updated material from the v.3.5 revision.

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Additional support material available online at: [www.icirclegames.com](http://www.icirclegames.com)

