Seabrink, the city of freedom

Long ago, Seabrink was founded by a band of pilgrims who set out from parts unknown, who crossed the world and braved many dangers. They arrived at the land that would become Seabrink, and began to build a home. Flash forward many years, and the city has become a bustling hub of self-sufficient life. Nowadays, the entire city runs on a system of gears and lifts, wooden platforms and steel shafts running in tandem. The whole city is powered by a pair of gigantic waterwheels, towering over even the peak of the spires of the city. Together, they are the wheels of the cosmos.

The wheels of the Cosmos

The first of these wheels is the wheel of the sun. Slower, but more reliable, the wheel of the sun is powered by a river. It’s counterpart, spinning the opposite direction, is the wheel of the moon. A waterfall powers this from the cliffs above, and it is the more forceful of the wheels, as well as a little smaller.

The layers of the city

The city within the wheels is divided into six levels- travel between them is easy, but each layer has it’s own inhabitants. The lowest layer is occupied by farmers, foresters, and those who work around the city, as well as the docks. The second level is home to the merchants, traders, and miscellaneous craftsmen. Above them are the mechanics, who maintain the wheels and works of the city. Next are the adventurers- those who explore the long-lost lands their ancestors came from. Second to the top are the blacksmiths, who create new works and machines. And finally, at the pinnacle of the city sit the priests and storytellers, charged with history and the stars above.

The guilds

Each layer of the city is controlled by the guild of it’s respective faction. Each of the guilds has their own structure and order, as well as their own leader. Finally, the heads of each of the six guilds come together to form the council of Six, who are the overall governors of the city. They control policy changes, and responses to major disasters- of course, it’s an arena rife with politics as each faction has their own beliefs on what’s best to do.

The farmer’s guild

The farmers are by far the most populous guild. They govern all intake of renewable and natural resources, including fish, wood, and of course their namesake farms. Unsurprisingly, their most common ally politically is the merchant’s guild. As a whole, they’re seen as the glue that keeps the city running, and are loved by the majority of the people. Notably, they also manage the production and sapping of Angel’s Beech trees. The current leader of the guild is a man named Eahard Rayne. A lifelong farmer, Eahard has little respect for nonsense and tomfoolery, and is the oldest member of the Council. Much like his guild, he is considered easy to work with as long as you don’t do something stupid, but if pissed off, the entire city knows to fear his justified wrath.

The merchant’s guild

Unlike the farmers, the merchants rub shoulders with all the other guilds of the city. Both proper merchants and craftsmen fall under their banner, and on their home level, trade flows freely. Politically they are a free agent, siding with whoever will further their goals the best at a given moment, though they’re careful to never alienate anyone too much. The current head of the guild is Kathel Wynte, a controversial figure. She was originally a blacksmith, but proved to have enough knack for trade as well as her craft that she managed to rise to power amongst the guild. She is cutthroat but fair- she amasses money not but for herself, but for her dreams of spending it to move the city forward in technology. But of course, her business practices and ruthlessness don’t sit well with all.

The mechanic’s guild

The mechanics are widely considered to be the most conservative of the guilds, as is befitting their role in society. They maintain the Wheels as well as all the offshoots that power the rest of the city. Thus, they are naturally the defenders of the status quo, and the ones most aware of the potential crisis on the horizon- within a generation, the constant expansion of the network of gears and shafts at heart of the city will exceed the capacity of both wheels. Thus, they aim to prevent any further expansion on that front. There are radicals within the guild, who propose building new wheels, or the even more extreme who propose alternative power sources. But for now, they are led by one Wolda Aldrest. The oldest of the current Six, he’s unflappable and stoic, the bulwark that his entire guild relies upon. At the young age of thirteen he began working on the Wheels, and even in old age he hasn’t stopped, leading the ritual maintenances. On the day of New Moon every cycle, the great shafts are disconnected, and the wheels spin freely. The best of the guild board the wheels, inspecting each section as they keep spinning, and patching up that which is damaged to keep the city turning.

The adventurer’s guild

Despite neighboring the mechanics, the adventurers are their polar opposites in every way. They are those who go out beyond the accepted boundaries of civilization to see what can be found, mounted on horses and armed with weaponry. They are by far the most recent guild, with some people still alive who yet remember a time when the adventurers weren’t even a formal idea. Politically, they are the liberals, believing in personal action over tradition- but they most embody the ideals of freedom the city was once founded upon. And at the head of their order is Aurelia Rene, the youngest of the Six. She near-singlehandedly revived the idea of the adventurer, upon returning to civilization with a skull larger than anything known to the people of Seabrink. Fast forward a few decades, and she’d managed to reforge the scattered adventurers into a proper guild. Her personality reflects that, being stubborn and forward, and incredibly tenacious towards her goals and those of her guild.

The blacksmith’s guild

Someone has to be at the forefront of innovation. And in this case, it’s the blacksmith’s guild. They take wood and steel, and forge it into new works, weapons, telescopes, and everything else. Politically, they’re joined with the adventurer’s guild near-constantly, also pushing for progress. Notably, of the guilds on the higher levels, they also manage mining for stone and ore- stone is rarely used due to the style of Seabrink, but ore is always in demand, mostly for their own projects to be passed onto other guilds. And of course, it’s all overseen by the guild’s leader- Grithelm Fringe. He was once a member of the Communion, but after continual headaches with low-quality divining instruments, he decided to prove he could do it better, and found that he enjoyed the challenges of the forge far more than vagaries of the stars. Appropriately, he is down to earth and blunt, having no desire for malarkey, and prefers the solace of the forge to the hammer.

The Astral Communion

Unlike the inhabitants of the lower layers, the Communion is not a proper guild. Rather, they are the religious and spiritual heads of the city. In order to explain them, one must first look at religious beliefs of the city, and to the stars. The residents venerate the stars, believing them to be where the tales of the past are told- and there lies the Communion’s dual purpose. They record and track every one of the stars, and the stories now associated with them. Equally as important, they record the history of the people of Seabrink, that their tales may not be lost. Thus, they are most often impartial in politics of the city, preferring to focus on what glimmers above. Their leader, known as the Oracle, is a woman by the name of Cyna Elfrid. Since birth, she was raised to fill the hereditary role, and does so admirably. She can interpret the stars better than any other, and guide those in need of guidance. Of note, however, is her daughter, Cece Elfrid. Unlike her mother, Cece is a rebellious spirit, who isn’t looking forward to becoming Oracle, and she wants change. This incoming conflict threatens to splinter the entire order, to unknown consequences.