

Project *Aileron* (Working Title)

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Author: Benny Schmidt, Production Lead / Executive Producer

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The Iron Siege of Hylvorn



Clinging to the jagged skirts of the Kaltic Mountains, Hylvorn stands as the last outpost of warmth within the Frozen Wastes. It is a city forged from the bones of a lost industrial age,

where the air tastes of coal-dust and frost, and the very architecture tells the story of a civilization that tried to out-build the winter.



The Austergarde Transition

The city's lower foundations still bear the name Austergarde. Under the previous High Command, the city functioned as a closed industrial loop where heat was strictly rationed to ensure the obedience of the labor force. Tattered dark emerald banners with gold trim - the colors of the old regime - still cling to the high iron rafters in the abandoned sectors. These ruins are marked by the original *Austergarde Crest*: A heavy gear surrounding a frozen heart.



The change to Hylvorn came with the arrival of the Hylvari. A race of dragonriders from the neighboring ancient settlement of Kaltos (now Coldhaven); the Hylvari are credited with the invention of fire. On a day now remembered as the Iron Siege, the Hylvari descended from the clouds above Austergarde on the backs of great dragons to liberate its people from the High Command, using iron harpoons to snare the city's defenses while fire-breathing dragons incinerated the mechanical oppressors. After the battle, the Hylvari returned to their mountain caves, leaving the residents to rename the city in their honor and fly the **Red Banner** - a black dragon's head on a crimson field.

The Archways of Industry

The layout of Hylvorn is defined by massive iron gears. Measuring between 30 to 60 feet in diameter, these giant gears are no longer part of a functioning machine. Instead, they sit half-submerged in the permafrost like the fossilized ribs of a leviathan.

Over centuries, the citizens have repurposed these rusted circles:

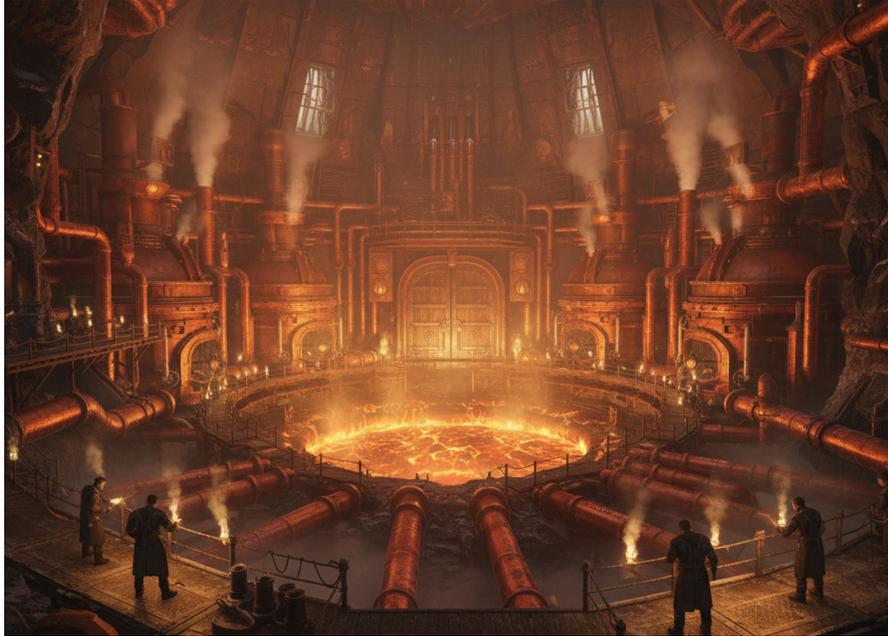
- **Gateways:** The most prominent gears serve as monumental archways, framing the main thoroughfares where the snow is packed hard by iron-shod boots.

- **Anchors:** Smaller gears are used as structural foundations for the timber-and-iron houses, their teeth providing perfect notches for heavy support beams.



The Grand Automata

Scattered throughout the town and the surrounding slopes are the Grand Automata. These deactivated mech-suits sit in various states of repose - some slumped against the mountainside, others standing upright like silent, frozen sentinels guarding the squares. Their copper plating has turned a dull, wintry green, and long icicles hang from their rusted hydraulic limbs. To the children of Hylvorn, they are landmarks; to the elders, they are a grim reminder of the war against the cold that was nearly lost.



The Mountain's Heart

The true lifeblood of Hylvorn is the Great Core, a massive, central hearth located deep within the belly of the mountain. A sprawling complex of geothermal furnaces and coal-fed boilers.

- **Radiators:** From the Great Core, a city-wide network of thick, insulated copper pipes snakes through every street and into every home.
- **The Bellows:** Located at the mouth of the geothermal vents, these are gargantuan, steam-driven fans that howl as they force heated air through the mountain's upper shafts. Their rotation is so fast it creates a permanent low-frequency hum that vibrates the floorboards of the houses above.
- **Hissing Streets:** The constant, rhythmic *hiss-thump* of steam traveling through the pipes provides a mechanical heartbeat to the city. These pipes are often exposed, and it is common to see residents leaning against them for a moment of warmth as they traverse the snowy paths.
- **An Internal Sun:** Inside the mountain's cavernous halls, the heat is so intense that workers move in light tunics, a stark contrast to the heavy furs required just fifty yards away outside the heavy blast doors.



Life in the Shadow

Hylvorn is a place of heavy shadows and golden windows. As the sun sets over the Frozen Wastes, the city transforms into a silhouette of jagged peaks and mechanical detritus. The only color in this world is the flickering amber light of the hearths reflecting off the blackened wood and the silver snow. It is a city that exists on the edge of extinction, held together by the lingering warmth of its own history.

Gerizat

For most... Gerizat is a death sentence... For the Hylvari, it's a starting point.

The island's harbor lies in ruin, abandoned by the High Command after the Iron Siege. As natives of the local caverns - this sudden power vacuum is exactly the spark the Hylvari needed to reclaim their home.

But... don't get too comfortable! The island of Gerizat offers: No warmth... No mercy... and no way out - but back through the heart of a frozen storm!

Coldhaven

Located in the Kaltic Mountains, Coldhaven is an ancient dwelling place of thermal vents and basalt perches. Outside, orderly rows of houses with red tinted glass windows provide a warm environment for the townsfolk to socialize and trade.

In the epochs of the Old World, this peak was known as Kaltos, a vast mountain citadel that served as the primary seat of Hylvari power.

Where massive war-horns once signaled a siege, the town now rings with the clanging of smith hammers and the greetings of neighbors.



The Resonant City of Bells



Deep within the silent, pressured depths of the midnight zone lies Bells, a sprawling metropolis of interconnected orbs that defy the crushing weight of the sea. The city does not sit in darkness; instead, it is bathed in a perpetual, flickering amber warmth that pulses against the deep indigo of the ocean floor.



The Living Light

The primary source of illumination comes from the lantern houses - miniature glass pavilions that crown every building. Inside these tiny dwellings live the Fire Fairies. Cherub-esque and glowing with a soft, sun-like radiance, these creatures possess wings that flutter like embers in a draft.

Oddly, despite their captivity, the fairies seem the most joyful residents of Bells. They spend every waking moment in a frantic, delightful state of chatter. To a Fire Fairy, socializing is sustenance; their glow brightens with every shared secret and peal of laughter. They pay no mind to the glass walls, for as long as they have a companion to talk to, their bellies and spirits are full.



The Symphony of the Deep

Surrounding the great glass orbs is a drifting forest of millions of bioluminescent bells. These jelly-like organisms cling to the currents and the architectural ribs of the city. As the undercurrents sway them, they produce a sound unlike anything on land:

- **The Chime:** A delicate, crystalline ringing that resonates through the water.
- **The Harmony:** With millions of bells tolling at once, the city creates a haunting, melodic drone that serves as the heartbeat of the deep.
- **The Glow:** Each chime triggers a soft pulse of neon blue and violet, creating a shimmering visual echo of the music.

Life Inside the Orbs

Inside the main structures, the citizens of Bells live in a world of distorted reflections and golden light. Looking out through the thick glass, the view is a chaotic masterpiece of dancing fire-light from the fairies and the rhythmic, glowing swaying of the bell-fauna. It is a city that never knows true night, existing in a permanent state of musical, glowing conversation.

Sweetwater

Sweetwater is a town built around a series of mineral-rich freshwater lagoons, fed by subterranean mountain springs.

The industrial shriek of the Ghost Train signals its arrival from Hylvorn every ten hours. It terminates at Night Oak Station, bringing mountain ore and Hylvari scouts to the lowlands.

The social heart of the town is Merlot, a quaint tavern operated by the barmaid, Cookie.



Torgaux: The Engine of the West



Torgaux is a city of vertical iron and trapped kinetic energy, anchored within the wind-scarred throat of the Dustlorn Canyons. While the surrounding wastes are stripped bare by the

unrelenting gales of the Zephyr Sea, the city utilizes the geography of the gorge to funnel, break, and harvest the air. It is a place of constant vibration, where the architecture is built to spin, snap, and whistle.

The Aileron Gate

The seaward wall and main entrance to the city is a massive engineering feat known as the Aileron Gate. Two soaring gothic stone towers rise from the canyon floor, serving as the skeletal anchors for a pair of gargantuan, feathered wings. Constructed from braced iron and reinforced stone, these wings span the width of the gorge to catch the primary force of the oncoming gale. The gate's two sky scraping towers serve as lifts to hoist ships from the ground level to the jetstream above, converting them into flying airships. As the sun sets directly behind the gate, the light bleeds through the gaps in the stonework, casting a long, winged shadow that stretches into the canyon interior.

A Kinetic Skyline

- **The Red Sails:** Towering windmills of weathered timber and heavy red fabric. The sails are kept under constant tension, spinning with a rhythmic, thundering crack that echoes off the cliff faces.
- **The Victorian Spires:** Slender, gothic iron poles are bolted into the higher rock shelves, each topped with a delicate gold propeller. These high-speed rotors catch the thinner, erratic currents, creating a shimmering golden blur against the darkening sky and emitting a sharp, metallic trill.

The Vaulted Canyon Market

Deep in the belly of the canyon, the city's residents have created a sanctuary from the wind. The Canyon Market is a sprawling network of stalls and workshops shielded by a monumental overhead canopy. This vault is constructed from intricate black iron latticework and thousands of panes of stained glass, bridging the gap between the canyon walls.



During the sunset, the sky above the gorge turns a deep, bruised orange. This light hits the stained-glass ceiling at a sharp angle, saturating the marketplace below in pools of warm amber, ruby, and violet. In this protected pocket, the air is heavy and still - a stark contrast to the chaos above - allowing the scent of ozone and heated brass to linger over the trade of desert spices and clockwork.

The Sound of the Engine

Torgaux is never silent. The city functions as a massive acoustic instrument; the floorboards of the homes and the stones of the plazas hum with the vibration of the turbines. Life here is measured by the "Gale" passing through the Aileron Gate and the frantic whir of the golden propellers. It is a city of heavy shadows and brilliant, filtered light, towering against the sky.

The Loom-Town of Galespind



Galespind is a humble farm town and delicate, industrial sibling to the great merchant hub of Torgaux. It is a relatively small town of silk, wood, and copper - powered by wind - perched atop a series of limestone ridges that catch the purest gusts of the Zephyr Sea.



Argauern Ranks



Built mostly underground on the planet Aurelion, Argauen Ranks is a vast industrial base and airstrip located at the base of an atmospheric rift. It is the primary gateway for heavy interstellar traffic, serving as the planet's primary loading dock.



Orbital Sky Docks

Massive airstrips in the sky above Argauern Ranks that serve public traffic. Here, Nobu and Teran crews work in tandem to prepare payloads for a five year trip back to Orizaya.



Fulgur Gap



Built into the walls of a tectonic rift on Aurelion, Fulgur Gap is a city of blinding purple light and lethal static. It is the heart of the galaxy's power supply, where Fulgurite crystals grow like jagged weeds.

- **Static Veins:** Raw Fulgurite pulses with a neon-purple radiance so intense it can be seen from orbit. The city's buildings are suspended on insulated cables to prevent them from being vaporized by ground-shifter lightning.
- **The Scavenger's Bazaar:** Managed by Grozlo, this is a chaotic marketplace where Nobu miners trade raw crystals for Hylvorn steel and Teran technology.

Zephyr Landing

A rugged landing pad buffeted by updrafts of ionized gas. Every ship docked here must be tethered to massive grounding rods, or the static buildup will weld the hull to the landing gear.



Apex Null



The ultimate expression of the Inter-Stellar Imperion's power, Apex Null is a massive, black, obsidian-smooth pyramid that floats in the highest reaches of Aurelion's atmosphere.



Obsidia

The hangar bay at the base of the pyramid. It utilizes an "air-curtain" barrier, allowing ships to exit into the vacuum without physical doors. The interior is a cold, brutalist labyrinth of violet data-streams and silent guards.