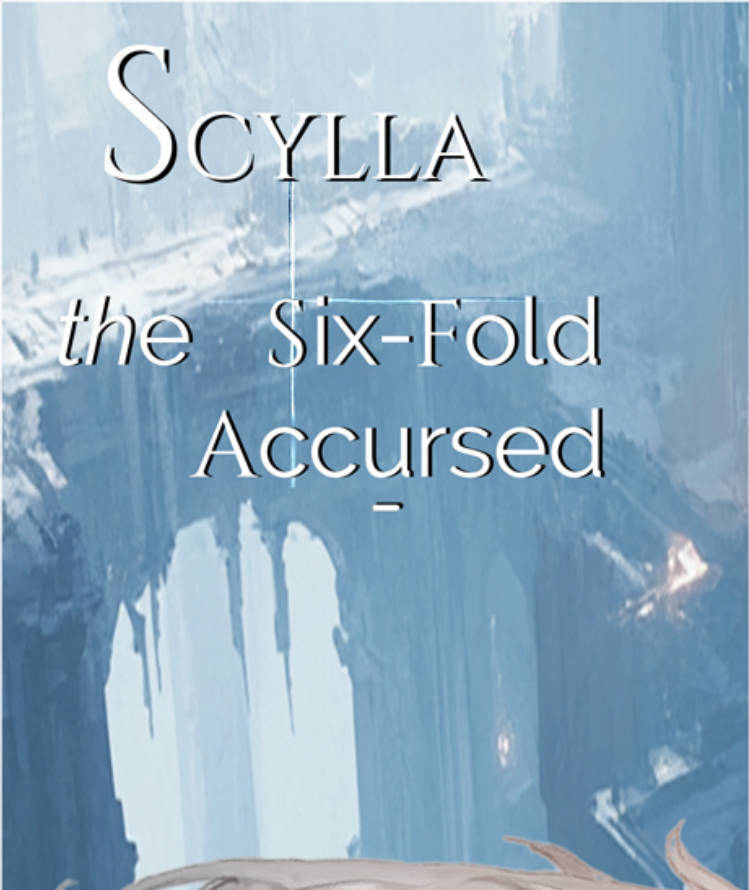




SCYLLA

*the Six-Fold
Accursed*

THE FALL OF THE BLACK CITADEL AND THE RITE OF THE ATHANOR

*« When light withers and silence screams through the void, it is then
- nourished by the abyss within - that she awakens.
She is the black punishment between worlds, the child of the Void. »*



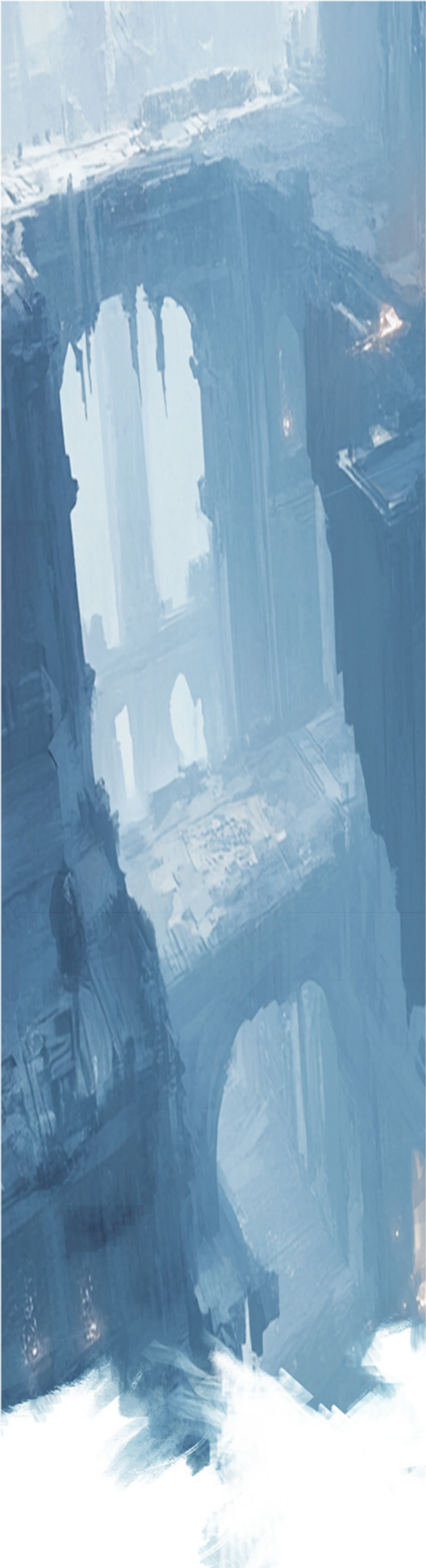
THE ARCHONS OF AVAËL

There was a time when **the Black Citadel** proudly stood upon the slopes of **the Obsidian Mountains**, overlooking the wild lands of **the Avaël Empire**.

Once the impregnable sanctuary of the Avaël Archons, it was the seat of unmatched power - a bastion where alchemy and sorcery intertwined to shape the destiny of the world.

Its most jealously guarded secret was **the Athanor**, an underground lake whose black waters shimmered like an inverted starry sky, harboring a power long forgotten by mortals.

Legends say that the Athanor was a fragment of **the Lower Realms** - a liquid mirror reflecting the depths, from which passages to forbidden lands would open. Immersing an artifact in its waters bestowed upon it an extraordinary might, but at the cost of a pact with forces beyond understanding.



Some even claimed that the Athanor could reveal the true essence of a being, either consuming or transcending it.

The Avaël Archons, masters of the Citadel, had built their empire by exploiting the mysteries of the Athanor. Yet such power came at a price. For this liquid abyss was not merely a source of magic, but a gateway - a fragile threshold between the mortal world and the lower planes, where natural laws broke down and the impossible became reality.

THE RITE OF THE ATHANOR - OFFERING OF BLOOD AND SHADOWS

One of the Archons' best-kept secrets was the Rite of the Athanor, an ancient ritual that temporarily infused a being or an artifact with the lake's power.

Legends told that souls drowned in its waters could be reborn, that weapons immersed within would emerge imbued with unfathomable might, and that those who dared to plunge into its black depths in search of forbidden knowledge would return forever transformed - able to bend magic to their will... if they returned at all.

The ritual was based on three essential elements.

Immersion. An object or a being - often carrying the soul of the participant - was plunged into the black waters, where the reflection of the stars seemed to reverse the passage of time.

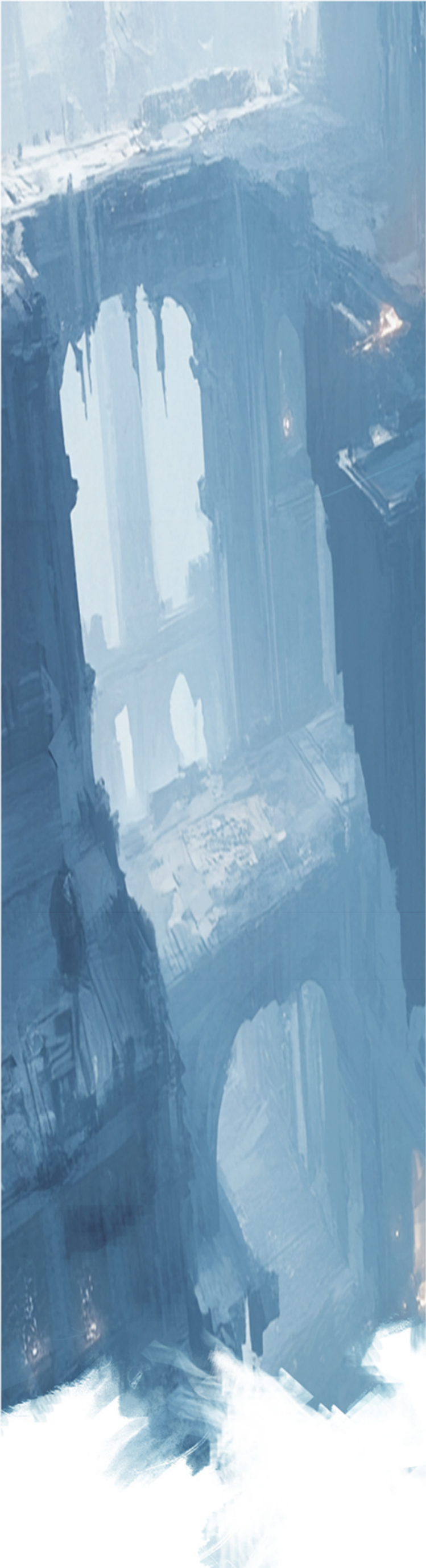
The Soul Fragment. Torn away in an act of despair or determination, this fragment was meant to feed the raw magic of the Nexus, the link between the world of the living and the lower planes.

The Bonding Oath. Recited in a slow, measured voice, it bound the officiant to the very essence of the Athanor, sealing their fate at the cost of their humanity.

Those who undertook the ritual reported hearing voices murmuring in the darkness - promises of infinite power... or cryptic warnings of a price they did not yet understand.

Some emerged glorified, wielding weapons capable of shattering the laws of the world.

Others never returned at all... A few unfortunate souls found their essence absorbed by the Athanor, their souls dissolved in its waters, doomed to haunt the lake for eternity.



THE FALL OF THE BLACK CITADEL - THE AWAKENING OF THE ABYSS

For one day, the Archons' greed exceeded all caution.

Deep within the fortress lay **the crypt of the Athanor**, a secret sanctuary where primitive magic interwove with the Archons' ambitions.

In this hallowed gloom, towering columns covered in glyphs caught the faint glow of a ritual fire. It was here that **Vaëliss the Elder**, the First and most tormented of the Archons, made a fateful decision. Tormented by the hunger for eternal power and haunted by his own doubts, he initiated the Rite of the Athanor, convinced that immortality resided within the black abyss of the underground lake.

When the ritual chants resonated beneath the crypt's vaulted ceiling, the Athanor, instead of yielding to his commands, opened into itself as a bottomless chasm. A sinister rumble rose from the lake's depths - a howl from another world. The once-still water surged into a wave of shadows, and from its abyss emerged the Spawn of the Void.

These nightmarish creatures - shifting, shadowy beings - erupted from the Nexus like a living tidal wave. Some took on indistinct forms, while others bore twisted, half-emaciated silhouettes, esembling macabre marionettes brought to life. They scaled the crypt's walls, invaded the lower galleries, and then spread through the Black Citadel like an inexorable tide.

The defenders tried to resist, but their blades had no effect on these disjointed forms, and their spells ricocheted like mere pebbles thrown into the ocean of the Spawn of the Void - uncontrollable, like a furious tidal surge. One by one, the towers crumbled, the armories were flooded with shifting darkness, and the Archons' screams were silenced one after the other in the night.

The surrounding villages, once thriving, were struck by a bone-chilling cold and oppressive darkness. Crops withered, rivers turned a sinister black, and the land - barren and scarred - bore the mark of an evil that spread far beyond the Citadel's walls.

The fall of the Black Citadel marked the end of an era of ambition. The towering spires cracked, the flows of the Athanor swallowed the crypt, and a shadow spread over the lands. Now, only the ruins of that once-mighty fortress remain - a desolate field haunted by the echoes of the past.

What has survived the legend of the Black Citadel is the beast that roams its depths.



THE RISE OF SCYLLA, THE SIX-FOLD ACCURSED

When the breach opened, the Athanor unleashed not only horrors from beyond but also its oldest guardian.

Scylla, the Six-Fold Accursed, awoke from a long slumber. A creature of obsidian scales and formidable venom, the hydra was born of the Nexus itself, forged in primordial arcana and steeped in every curse sealed within these walls.

She surged from the waters like a living scourge, her six heads scrutinizing her new realm with a malevolent, inhuman intelligence.

Unleashing her might, Scylla brought the fortress to ruin under the shock of her rage. The last survivors were swept into oblivion. Only the ruins remained - partially engulfed by the Athanor, haunted by the spectrums of those who had dared defy the Nexus. She ended the Citadel's fall - not out of mercy, but because this place now belonged to her.

Rare testimonies - from the ramblings of delirious wanderers or the whispered prophecies of oracles - speak of Scylla, the Six-Fold Accursed, with a terror tinged with madness. This colossal hydra, with scales as dark as a starless night and eyes burning with forbidden knowledge, stands vigil over the Nexus - the heart of ancient power, where the magical forces of the world intersect and mingle with those from beyond.

Her six heads are the embodiment of ancient curses, each guarding forbidden knowledge and wielding a power both dreadful and prodigious.

First, there is **the Head of the Void**, whose breath is a wave of absolute emptiness that annihilates matter and magic, reducing all existence to nothing.

Then comes **the Head of the Scourge**, which with a single strike inflicts incurable ailments, corrupting both flesh and soul.

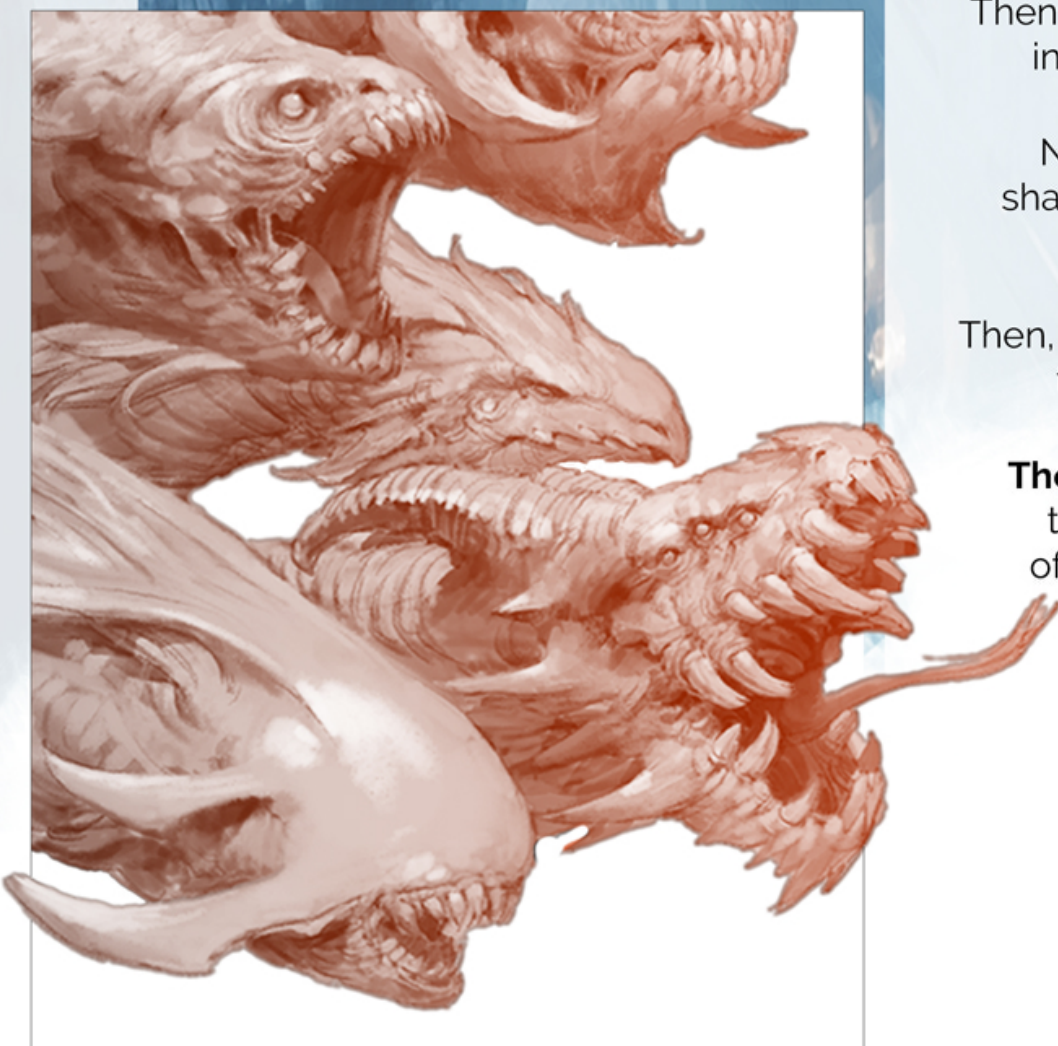
Next is **the Head of the Primordial Radiance**, whose cry shatters all will and distorts reality - casting those who hear it into the gaps of time and shifting illusions.

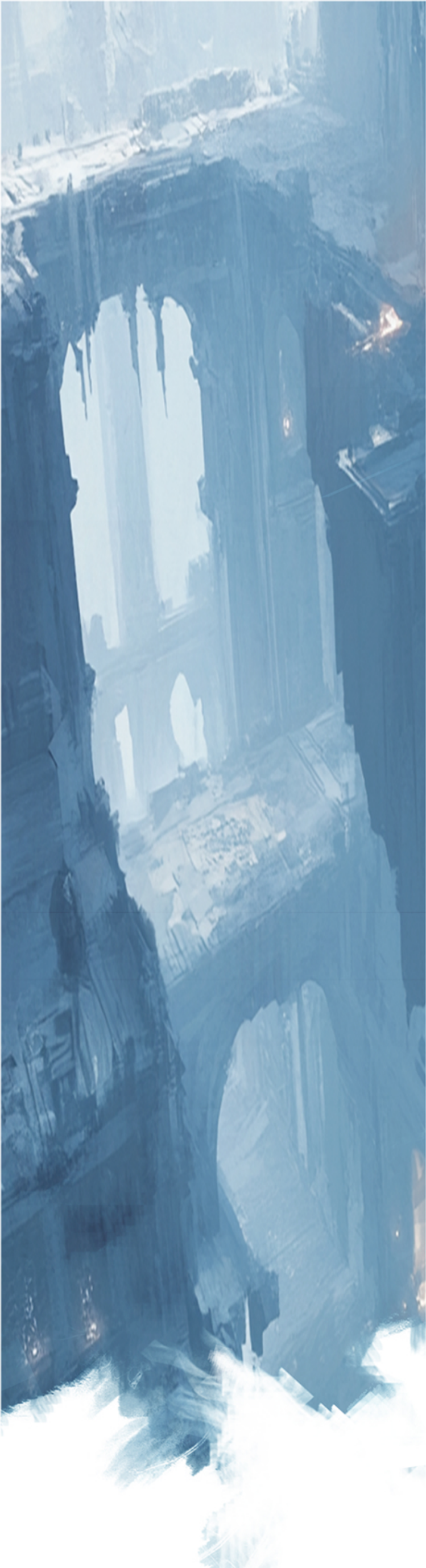
Then, **the Head of the Eternal Ashes**, whose petrifying gaze turns the defiant into dust before they can fall to their knees.

The Head of Blazing Fire follows, its breath igniting not only the body but also consuming the memories and history of a being, erasing every trace of its passage in this world.

Finally, **the Head of Judgment**, which sees far beyond mortal souls and murmurs unbearable truths, shattering the spirit of those who listen.

Even more terrifying is her **infernally regeneration** - for every head severed, a new one emerges, imbued with exponentially greater power, even more formidable than before.





Those who dared attack Scylla witnessed their enchanted weapons turn upon them, their companions succumbing to madness, their bodies dissolving into endless flames or being petrified before finally turning to dust.

THE SANCTUARY OF THE DAMNED - A FORBIDDEN POWER

Adventurers speak of a bone-chilling shiver running down the spine upon approaching the Citadel, of echoes of unfinished rituals, and of shadows moving beneath the reflections of the black waters.

Even today, the Black Citadel remains a silent tomb - a forgotten sanctuary where the secrets of the Archons and the curse of the Nexus lie in rest. Ancient relics are scattered among the bones of fallen heroes. Legendary broken swords, armor corroded by twisted enchantments, talismans consumed by their own magic. Some adventurers claim to hear voices rising among the ruins, calling upon the living to avenge their fate... or to join the army of shadows imprisoned by the Athanor.

Scylla watches. She prowls silently at the edge of the lake, her six heads ever alert to the imprudent; her eyes pierce the darkness, on the lookout for a soul daring enough to approach the gates of her realm.

For despite the horror, the legends persist - somewhere beneath these ruins lie powers that no one has ever been able to master. There are still many secrets buried to be discovered, and the Athanor slumbers beneath the rubble, dark and unfathomable, its starry reflection whispering to those who dare draw near that beyond the hydra's howls, there may yet be a key to vanquish Scylla, the Six-Fold Accursed.