

Fanes of Barovia

Herein lies the Druidic story of “ba ly saga” which means “the saga of the three”, about the three Fey who, in ancient times, cared for the lands of Barovia and nurtured them, as a mother loves and nurtures her own child; and their holy Fanes, three.



Three celestial beings, the Fey sisters

Before any people lived in the valley known as Barovia, three celestial beings, the Fey sisters collectively oversaw the flora, fauna and land. Together in their unity, they were the mother nature caring for the valley. Each of the Fey sisters provided their love and care over the valley.

† *The Forest Fey oversaw the plants and animals.*

† *The Water Fey oversaw the rain, lakes, and rivers.*

† *The Mountain Fey oversaw the land and the earth.*

Together they created a balance and harmony through the seasons.

When the first people came to the valley, the people learned of the three Fey. The people respected the Fey and saw them as their goddesses that took care of the valley. As the people learned to walk in harmony with nature, they created an order to pay tribute and respect to the natural balance, as the people were guests of the valley and the Fey.



The Fanes (stone circles)

This order of Druids created three stone circles, known as Fanes, each representing a Fey. The first stone circle (Fane) was built on the edge of the forest as a tribute to the Forest Fey. Another Fane was built along the river as a tribute to the Water Fey. The third Fane was built on a hill looking up towards the grand mountains as a tribute to the Mountain Fey.

During the longest day of summer, the Summer Solstice, when the sun was at its zenith, the Druids would arrive at each of the Fanes (stone circles) and lay flowers around the stones and thank the Fey for a wonderful spring. On the longest night, the Winter Solstice, the Druids would light candles and bring fresh warm loaves of bread as a gift to keep the Fey warm during the long winter nights.



Fey Gems

*B*arovia was a rich and lush fertile mountain valley and was frequently covered with clouds and mists which kept the flora healthy and beautiful but was a conundrum for peoples trying to track the planting season using the sky.

Over time the Fey realized the people and their Druid order were also part of the cycle of life in the valley. The Fey ventured into a mountain full of amber. They discovered amber which had a magical property. It could harness magic and power. Each Fey collected a shard of amber from the mountain and created a Fey Gem, placing a fair portion of their celestial magic into each gem.

The Fey left their gems at their respective Fane (stone circle) instructing the Druids to bury the gems under the stone circles. The gems buried under the Fane would provide a sign (a glyph that would glow), four times a year; the Spring Equinox, the Summer Solstice, the Autumnal Equinox, and the Winter Solstice. The Fane Glyphs helped the Druids to guide the farmers and ranchers of Barovia and inform them when to plant and when to harvest. It also told them when to take the herds up to the fresh summer pastures, and when to bring them home for the winters.

For centuries, the people lived in harmony with nature in the valley and felt blessed by the Fey. Four times of the year the Druids would bear gifts and seek the signs at the Fanes (stone circles). The Druids would recite a poem for each Fey as part of the ritual.

Gifts to the Feys

† *Spring Equinox the Tser Flower*

† *Summer Solstice a small bunch of Barovian Grapes*

† *Autumnal Equinox a bushel of Red Barovian Apples*

† *Winter Solstice a loaf of bread made from Barovian Wheat*

It was no secret that the Fey sisters had a soft spot for newborn babies. They were known to occasionally follow the cries of a newborn out of the wilds to visit new mothers in rural areas. Once there, they would fawn over the baby for a bit, then wish the mother and child well and leave them in peace. On rare occasions, if a baby was born in spring, newborn fawns would accompany the Fey to visit the newborn babies, unifying and bonding the people and the animals of the valley.



Amber Temple

Centuries drifted by, without warning, Dark Powers invaded the valley. The Fey and Druids together fought against the Dark Powers but realized they could not defeat them. The Fey shared the knowledge of the powerful magic in the mountain of amber with the Druids. If the powerful amber could harness Fey's magic, it may harness the Dark Powers plaguing the valley. The Fey and Druids harnessed every ounce of magical amber within the mountain to create a secret temple to imprison the darkness far away from the valley and the people. A young Druid, Khazan became the first custodian of the Amber Temple, keeping the secret and serving to protect the valley from the darkness. Khazan learned magic, becoming a great wizard, and trained other Druids in becoming wizards to join the secret order to protect the Amber Temple and her secrets. Khazan eventually returned to the valley, living out his life in his lone tower studying magic and offering his knowledge to those who sought it. The Amber Temple became the greatest secret of the valley. Centuries passed by and eventually the Druids and those in the valley forgot about the temple and their brethren the wizard guardians of the Amber Temple in the snow-covered mountains.

First Kings

When the first kings arrived in Barovia, they brought with them their religion of the Morning Lord. Churches were erected and the King was blessed by the Morning Lord to rule over the people. The Morning Lord cherished his beautiful sunrises, so he saw to it that the pervasive morning mists of Barovia were regularly burned off. This made the farmers crops grow stronger and taller, but slowly, the native lush plant-life of Barovia was scorched and withered. Eventually, the people of the villages forgot about the Fey and paid their tribute to the King and his Morning Lord for safety. They built walls around their villages to protect them from the wilderness and feigned evils preached to them by the church of the Morning Lord.

The Druids, with their beliefs no longer welcomed in the villages, moved away to a small grove in the far corner of Barovia and left the fledgling kingdom to its own fate, forevermore. The Druids continued to pay tribute to the Fey. The farmers, in secret, not to disrespect the King and his Morning Lord, also paid tribute to the Fey, for they knew the Fey were the guardians that protected the land and provided harmony within the valley.

The Fey took no interest in the world of men who lived behind their walls and praying to their gods. For the Fey were in the valley long before kings arrived and would be in the valley long after the kings were gone.



The Great War

A prince arrived in the valley with his army to claim the land as his kingdom. His army was mighty and his focus and aptitude for battle was great. The war brought destruction to the valley and for the first time, the Feys took notice of man's grave destruction upon the land itself.

When the war was over the prince stood victorious and claimed the land as his own. The Fey saw darkness festering in the prince. Darkness they had once thought long forgotten and imprisoned in the Amber Temple. The Morning Lord was exiled, and the mists returned to the lands of Barovia with a vengeance. They rolled in and meshed with the thick black smoke of war that hung heavy in the Barovian air and clung to its trees. It created a thick gray mist covering the lands in a cold gray pallor. The mists diminished the Fey's magic terribly and unbalanced their connection to the lands and the cycle of life itself. There was something else... undefinable... the mists seemed to have their own mind. The mist encompassed the valley and the cycle of life slowed. The budding signs of life in the Spring were gone, animals born with hollow eyes of darkness, flowers no longer blossomed, and eggs were black. New horrid creatures emerged from the woods, the flowers died, crops began to rot, and the land turned dark. The signs of darkness were also seen in the villages, as babies were born who would not cry or laugh, some believed they were soulless. When the Fey discovered this final turn of events, they became deeply disturbed and frantic. Their pleas to higher powers went unanswered. Something was very, **VERY** wrong with the natural order.

The Fey believed that the cloud of darkness surrounding the prince gave birth to the terrible mists. It was said that the prince had lost his only brother and his true love during the great war. The prince's heart was full of darkness and sorrow and nothing else. He spent extended tracts of time searching for the body of his lost love, and his heart was a bottomless pit of despair. The prince's bearing was such that it affected everything around him. So heavy was the burden of his loss, that it cast a great darkness over the land and affected the mists themselves.

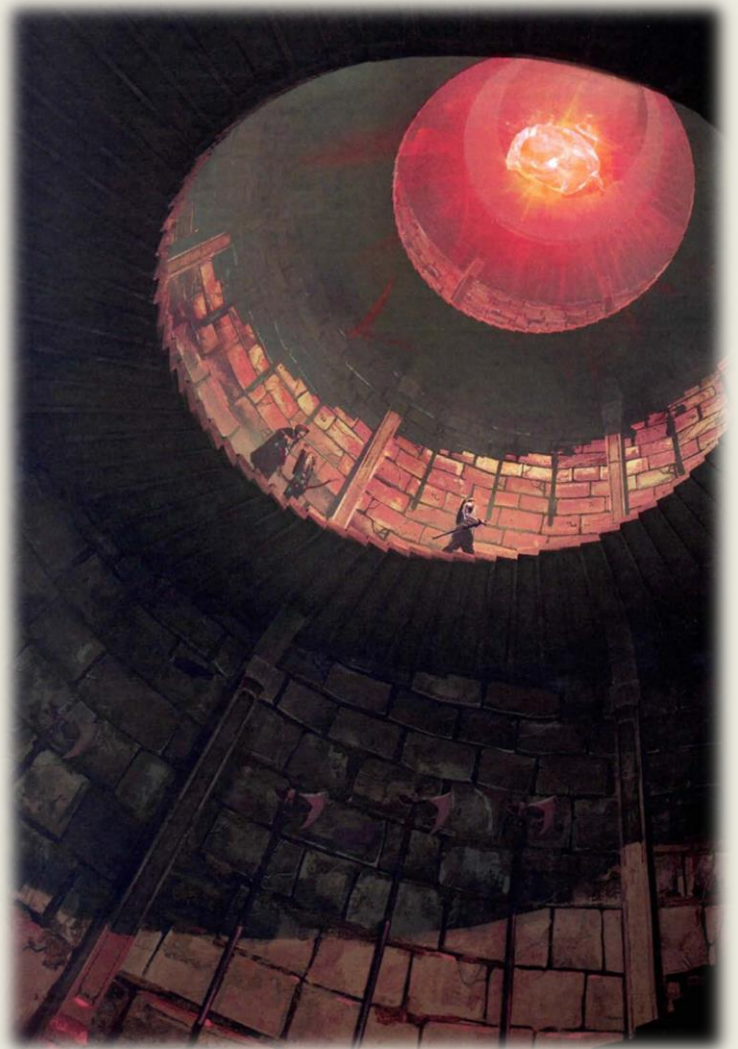


Heart of Sorrow

The Fey believed that they would need to restore the prince's heart and lift the darkness that surrounded him to heal the mists that blanketed the valley and strangled the life from the land itself. The Fey decided to create a magical gift for the prince that would lift the sorrow in his heart, the Heart of Sorrow. The Fey broke their gems in half and used some of their remaining power to meld the three halves into a great artifact and form the Heart of Sorrow. The Fey poured their love of life and the valley into the gem and gave it the magical properties to absorb the sorrow and darkness from the heart of the prince.

The Water Fey took human form and traveled to the prince's castle to bring him this great gift, the Heart of Sorrow. The Water Fey explained how the prince's heavy heart perverted the mists which covered the land with darkness. She explained that the gift crafted by the three Fey sisters' gems with powerful magic would lift the sorrow from his heart. He would be free of the despair and remorse that shackled him, and it would restore the land, and the kingdom would rejoice. The prince was pleased with the gift and the magical power of the Heart of Sorrow, which invigorated the prince with unbridled zeal and swift decision making.

The prince had heard of the fabled Fey and had previously given them no mind during the great war, thinking them only a myth. However, upon learning of their power and the gems, he could not let them roam free. He imprisoned the Water Fey and ordered his minions to desecrate the Fanes (stone circles), find the other half of the three gems, and capture the Fey.



Fey Exodus

A raven, sitting in the window of the castle, overheard what took place between the prince and the Water Fey. It was no ordinary raven, it was a Wereraven. The Wereraven flew faster than the prince's orders traveled and warned the two Fey and the Druids, for the prince was the darkness and he had sent his minions to destroy the Fanes (stone circle), find the gems, and capture the remaining Fey sisters.

The Mountain and Forest Fey dug up their gems and together went to the Fane (stone circle) on the shores of the river near Berez, but the prince's minions had already desecrated the Fane of the Water Fey (stone circle) and the blue gem was missing. Fearing the blue gem was in the hands of the dark prince and their sister his prisoner, they needed to find others to come to their aid, but the villagers of Barovia no longer believed in the Fey, for generations they had worshiped the Morning Lord, and paid tribute to their new Lord of Barovia, the dark prince.

With only two gems, their sister locked away, and their Fanes desecrated, they hid the two remaining gems. The Forest Fey entrusted her green gem with the Wereravens who had proven to be honorable and loyal. The Mountain Fey entrusted her red gem with the old wizard who lived in the tower, whom she had come to know and trust.

Their next course had become more difficult than their dwindling powers could bear, they needed to obtain the blue gem, rescue the Water Fey and restore the Fane (stone circles). Only then could the three Fey and their gems be brought together to defeat the dark prince. They needed to find others who were trustworthy, strong, and had the fortitude to face the dark prince and his minions. There was no one in the valley who they could turn to, and they would have to find truly powerful and stout rebels to aid them. The Fey would hide from the dark prince and his minions, until they could find agents strong enough to resist the prince, then deputize them to aid them in their battle against the corrupt master tactician.

The Forest Fey transformed into a human and lived among the people of Vallaki. She keeps her eyes and ears open, looking for those who could provide aid and watching those who served the dark prince. The Mountain Fey disappeared in search of those brave enough to aid them and face the dark prince.

Baba Lysaga

The dark prince underestimated the power of the Water Fey. She escaped the prison and in the catacombs during her escape, she found the skull of a great dragon she once knew, the dragon Argynvost who the dark prince had killed. She used the remaining magic she could draw upon and cast a powerful spell of flying on the skull and sat upon the dragon skull flying from the castle to warn her sisters.

When she arrived, her sisters had vanished, the Fanés (stone circles) were desecrated and destroyed, and the gems were gone. She searched the forests and mountains, but to no avail.

When the dark prince learned the Water Fey had escaped and took his greatest prize, the skull of his adversary, Argynvost, he filled with rage. He called upon dark magic to lay waste to the village on the river, Berez, which paid homage to the Water Fey, as a warning to all Barovians: The Fey were enemies of the dark prince. Any village that prayed, paid tribute, or honored a Fey would be destroyed. The river rose and flooded the once beautiful village of Berez. Over time Berez became ruins and the surrounding area became a swamp. The dark prince, in his cruelty, cursed the Water Fey to become the Swamp Fey, so that no one but the nasty creatures that inhabited the swamp would pay homage to her.



The Water Fey, now the cursed Swamp Fey, returned to her Fane (stone circle) and the ruins of Berez that lay in the swamp. Time passed and she grew bitter and angry, but without her gem and her sisters, she had little power.

The Water Fey traveled to the Amber Temple in the mountains and vested upon the Dark Powers that were imprisoned there. She sought the powers held deep in the Amber Temple to defeat the dark prince and restore the valley.

As she scoured the catacombs of the temple and the caverns of amber, she became obsessed and corrupted by the Dark Powers. Her body twisted and contorted as she made pacts with the Dark Powers, which the valley had long forgotten. When she emerged from the Amber Temple, she was no longer the lovely Water Fey, but now a deformed grotesque creature.

She returned to the swamp ruins of Berez and practiced her newfound dark magic powers. Creating creatures of darkness and a race of frog people known as the Bullywug who served her. She has made pacts with the witches and swamp hags, who are her spies in Barovia. Other dark creatures roam the swamps, some having run afoul of her dark experiments. Some believe she is raising an army of swamp creatures to destroy the dark prince and even the villages of men, whom she blames for all that has happened.

It is believed the Swamp Fey has taken the name, Baba Lysaga, as her own and with fiendish pride.

