

# Oathbound® Arena

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## The Oath of War

*With chains of steel we bind thee  
On sands of red, never free*

*To enslave, to kill, all for gold  
The fate of the strong set to unfold  
From the depths the great shall rise  
For only the strongest can claim the prize*

*The second of eight, whose flows blood red  
On rusted wings, never to shed  
Death by steel is thy curse  
Forever true is this verse*

*Never shall you know true peace  
Never shall your hatred cease*

OATHBOUND: *Arena* is intended to be used as a supplement to the OATHBOUND® campaign setting by Bastion Press. This book assumes the reader is familiar with information presented in the OATHBOUND: *Domains of the Forge* campaign book. *Arena* is the second domains sourcebook released for the OATHBOUND setting. The first domain, Penance, is detailed in *The Plains of Penance, Wrack & Ruin*, and the OATHBOUND: *Domains of the Forge* hardcover.

OATHBOUND: *Arena* details the largest domain on the world of the Forge. The lands of this domain are vast stretches of red sand, spent gold mines, and dotted with lush oases coveted by powerful warlords and those that serve them. Unlike the other seven domains of the world, *Arena* is a land ruled by vast armies commanded by strong warlords, who fuel their conflicts with gold and other precious commodities hidden beneath the sands. This cycle has gone unbroken for countless centuries, and is what makes the red sands of *Arena* one of the most dangerous places on the Forge for even the most resilient of adventurers.

The Forge is an old world, one created and maintained by seven powerful and enigmatic beings known as the Feathered Fowl. These divine seven, one for each domain of the Forge, are bound by an oath taken eons ago to hold fast the world against the escape of the Nameless One—a being of incredible power imprisoned within the heart of the world. The devices and desires of the seven have searched the multiverse for mortals to help further their ambitions on the Forge. Only the eccentric godlike psyches of the seven can understand how or why they do what they do on this world. *Arena*, and its feathered mistress Barbello, is no exception.

The strange world of the Forge is also one of outlandish creatures from a thousand worlds, and countless intelligent races and cultures that have been drawn here by the Seven from across the cosmos—all to serve as pawns in their effort to break free of their oath. The Forge is a world of high science, powerful magic and ancient mysteries waiting to be uncovered by intrepid adventurers. This is the world of OATHBOUND.

## Product Summary

This product is organized into 11 Chapters, plus appendices. Game Masters should read the entire book, while players should avoid the adventure section (Chapter 11) or any texts contained inside a colored box.

- Chapter 1 gives a summary of OATHBOUND: *Domains of the Forge*, highlighting *Arena* as an entry point to the world and how it relates to other domains.
- Chapter 2 walks the reader through an overview of the lands of *Arena*. This section details the domain's unique geography, cultures and races, the major civilized areas, and the land's primary means of trade and commerce.
- Chapter 3 takes a look at the ecology of the *Arena*, detailing various flora, fauna, and non-monstrous animals. This covers the deserts, jungles, oases, and oceans that encompass the domain.
- Chapter 4 details the primary economic means of the warlords who rule the domain: mining and prospecting for gold. With gold a warlord can raise an army in which to conquer other territories, capture land and enslave labor, and mine more gold.
- Chapter 5 introduces the reader to the lords of the land, the powerful warlords of *Arena*. Learn who are the most influential, where they are located, and discover their desires and plans for the people and the lands they rule.
- Chapter 6 outlines the oceans that surround *Forge's* largest domain. Discover what races control the waves of *Arena*.
- Chapter 7 summarizes how *Arena* fits in with the rest of the domains of the Forge. The politics and trade between the warlords and rulers of other domains is detailed here.
- Chapter 8 is a GM and PC section that introduces the reader to the mass combat associated with the massive armies of the warlords. It also discusses how large-scale battles are organized, and gives ideas to the GM on how to treat this type of game-play in an *Arena* campaign.
- Chapter 9 covers new PC races and prestige classes unique to the domain, as well as new gifts and prestige races that are reflective of *Arena*.
- Chapter 10 brings forth the great war machines used by some warlords in their fight to gain territory and gold: large-scale artillery, siege engines, and magical war golems, just to name a few.
- Chapter 11 is a ready-made adventure that takes the PCs from the city of Penance to the harsh red sands of *Arena*, expanding the OATHBOUND campaign into the Forge's largest domain.



# The World of the Forge

*"They say that the crimson sands of Arena are stained with the blood of those lain on the altar of war. True that countless armies have savaged themselves here, but it is their dreams that stain this barren realm. Shattered, flayed, and stripped of all sentiment and hope, they gild the sand, making each grain a precious jewel of a dream lost and broken. This is why Arena is the wealthiest of domains. This is why I want it all."*

*- The Grand Asherake to members of his court*

The creation of madness and desperation, the Forge is a world fashioned from the collective will of godlike entities who find themselves bound by an oath they can neither sunder nor understand. It is a world of dichotomies, polar opposites residing side by side in relative stability, though never harmony. Composed from the prized pieces of thousands of worlds, the Forge was crafted by the will of the Feathered Flock, the Keepers of the Seven Locks that bar the door against an unspeakable secret. Populated by peoples and races as dissimilar as the land itself, it is more a collage of life than a carefully matured sphere of existence. It is these differences that make the setting of OATHBOUND unique in its thrills and dangers. It is a restless world where the Feathered Flock battle to uphold their oath while trying to undermine it. It is a land where unknown people become heroes who batter against the walls of a prison they unknowingly find themselves in.

## Its Making

The Forge is a manifestation of hope and despair. It was conceived and birthed by servants of a nameless god who strove to overtake the entire universe with his cosmic authority. So mighty was this lord of gods that it took the entirety of the remaining deities to overpower him. Bereft of influence, the nameless god was imprisoned by the coalition, who sundered his creations and laid waste to his immense domains. Unchecked in their wrath, the coalition took his seven most loyal servants, beings of titanic power known as the Feathered Flock, and bound them as the Keepers of the Seven Locks. Forced to swear terrible oaths written in their own blood, each of the Seven was made lord of an empty citadel, the sealed portals of their master's prison.

An age of ages passed, during which the Feathered Flock mulled the Great Oath proclaimed against them, gleaning errors in its intent that only millennia of study could reveal. Armed with new hope they attempted to work within the constraints of their oaths, stealing the power it afforded. Though not allowed to venture from their plane of confinement, they were not forbidden from drawing others within. With vision strengthened by interminable longing, they scanned the worlds beyond their own. Their patience was rewarded as they began to draw bits of the far cosmos to them, coalescing them into a new

*Its Making*



*Illustrated by Jeremy McHugh*

## The World of the Forge

world of churning possibilities. Empowered, the Seven gave peace to the chaos they had created, each sculpting a domain to their liking and personality.

Aware that their freedom could only be purchased with their defeat, but forsworn from allowing it to occur, the Seven began to populate the world with entities that possessed the potential for greatness. Most never amounted to the faintest glimmer of power, instead wasting themselves on petty designs or immediate gratification. Compelled by their oaths, the Fowl repeatedly swept their creation bare, remaking their vision with grim desperation. Eventually, a balance was achieved that allowed the Fowl to foster greatness in their seeds. Though prevented by their oaths from taking a direct hand in the fates of their charges, the Feathered Flock could influence their environment, exposing the seeds to crucial situations that could shape their rise to power. Though obliged to destroy those that threaten their position as celestial wardens, the Seven Fowl continue to nurture dreams of eventual freedom, realizing that eternity makes all things probable.

## Its Makers

The rulers of the Forge are winged, four-horned, blindfolded beings that take residence in domains fashioned from their desires and attitudes. Each distinctive realm facilitates the goals of its Feathered Fowl. Wielding supreme power within the confines of their domain, the Feathered Flock use avatars to mold and reshape their vision of personal perfection, providing it does not invoke the dreadful Great Oath that dominates them.

## Barbello

Barbello is the Mask of Fury, the volatile ruler of Arena and the most wrathful of the Seven. Naked of deception or cunning, she acts according to her will, never forsaking her passions for gain. Despite any intended goals, Barbello continually throws caution aside and ventures wherever her impulsiveness carries her. Battle is her weakness and her strength. An entity of war and destruction, she desires the return of the nameless god for the catastrophe it would impart. However, she secretly harbors a despondent resentment for her actions, desiring to simply walk away from the history she has created and endured.

## Bathkol

The most reclusive and cerebral of the Feathered Flock, Bathkol rules the volcanic domain of Kiln. Less mindful of the physical nature of his creation, Bathkol treads the metaphysical realms, plumbing the depths of his inner being for reasons known only to him. His domain is the most ordered of the Seven and is becoming even more so, leading many to propound that he has elevated himself to a higher state of being. Whether this is true or whether it could allow him to deceive the oath is unknown and will remain so until Bathkol reveals his designs. Since he has not been seen in nearly ten centuries, the answer is not likely forthcoming.

## Colopitiron

The only non-original member of the Feathered Flock, Colopitiron commands the northern domain of Eclipse, a region of perpetual night where honor and morality are eagerly quashed. Once a mortal rogue named Annoxus, Colopitiron still clings to the world he once knew before slaying the original Colopitiron and taking on his power—and his oath. Cruel and resentful, he places his harsh hand everywhere on his domain. His seldom pulls outsiders to his domain, instead relishing his ability to impose his will on the oppressed populace. Resigned to his current state, Colopitiron does not attempt to overturn his oath, but takes what fate proffers.

## Haiel

The bestial heart of the hunter thumps in the breast of this Feathered Fowl. His domain is Wildwood, a vast expanse of jungle and thick forest wherein he pursues his quarry. Callous to the needs of his holding, Haiel sees its occupants as prey meant to offer him respite from the doldrums of his existence. Either individually or collectively, the inhabitants of Wildwood eventually draw the attention of the Blade of the Green, who sponsors hunts where they can prove their worth or provide entertainment. Relatively content with his existence, he vacillates over his feelings about the release of the nameless god.

## Israfel

Israfel, the Queen of Penance, is the most influential of the Feathered Flock. She conceived that the Great Oath could be circumvented, and dreamt of the Forge and its seeding long before her compatriots ever rose above their despondency. As a keeper of knowledge and the spouse of the nameless god, Israfel attempts to guide the actions of her fellows, using her vast understanding of the limitations of the Great Oath to their best advantage. Though her knowledge is incomplete, it does permit Israfel to investigate potential avenues of exploitation. However, the vagaries of the Great Oath chasten any overt approach. As such, Israfel is careful to not reveal her complete designs to the other Feathered Fowl, lest she invoke their oaths.

## Nemamiah

The eldest of the Seven, Nemamiah rules the southern domain of the Vault, a lifeless realm inhabited by foul undead bent on discovering the method of his destruction. Once the Charioteer of the Sun, Nemamiah ruled a lush and green domain, a paradise. That changed when a madman shattered the magic mirrors that heated the domain. The land perished in the frigid night, as did Nemamiah's will. He underwent a most grievous transformation, taking the epithet The Leper. Slipping into a hopeless darkness, Nemamiah transformed the dead inhabitants of his domain into undead, and to them laid the task of seeking his absolute oblivion.

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Chapter 8: War: This entire chapter (pages 84-93).

Chapter 9: People and Powers: The Ravager prestige class (pages 94-96); the Seeker prestige class (pages 96-97); the Sovereign prestige class (pages 97-98); the Ferrin racial traits (pages 100-101); Trusk racial traits (pages 102-103); Valkyrie racial traits (page 104); Vogel racial traits (page 106); Prestige Races (pages 108-113).

Chapter 10: War Machines: This entire chapter (pages 114-128).

Appendices A-D: All of this material.

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