

Myrah: The Grey World

Myrah (pronounced "MY-rah," with the first syllable rhyming with "my" and the second with "rah" as in "hurrah") is the home world of [William Davenport](#), often referred to as the "grey world" due to its pervasive gloom and oppressive atmosphere. It serves as the starting point for William's story, a planet marked by environmental degradation, rigid social hierarchies, and a corrupted magical system that has shaped its history and society for over a millennium. Once a vibrant and wild place, Myrah has devolved into a dystopian realm where magic is wielded by an elite few to maintain control, contrasting sharply with the freer, more diverse worlds William encounters in his travels.

Geography and Environment

Myrah's landscape is dominated by a monotonous, dreary palette of grays, reflecting its nickname as the grey world. The skies are perpetually overcast with overlapping layers of clouds, smog, and dust, caused by a planetary magical barrier that conflicts with the ozone layer, trapping pollutants and preventing natural atmospheric circulation. This results in a polluted, shadowed environment with scant forests, grimy cities littered with debris, and sickly grey trees that struggle to thrive. The sun feels less warm here compared to other worlds, contributing to hollow, uninspiring seasons: cloudy and grey summers, misty or cloudy falls, cold and dark winters, and springs that barely combat the overarching sense of hopelessness.

Geographically, the planet features rivers, mountains, and forests, but much of the arable land is covered by urban sprawl. Cities like the capital Thallius are densely built, with decent-sized buildings including over-20-story apartment complexes. However, urban areas are enclosed by meter-thick walls and protective magic bubbles to segregate inhabitants. Beyond the cities lie dangerous, sparsely populated regions such as high cliffs, rough mountain trails, sparse dry deserts, and deserted islands in the Eastern Sea, which serve as hideouts for outlaws and limit surveillance. Phenomena like fire showers—bursts in the night sky from space dust or magical generator discharges—are common but unremarkable.

Society and Culture

Myrah is an authoritarian oligarchy governed by a magical aristocracy, characterized by secret police, citizen restraints, political backstabbing, and widespread repression. Society is strictly stratified by magical aptitude and birth status: - **First rank:** Pure-blooded magi from generations of magical lineage, forming the elite ruling class with access to superior lifestyles, but plagued by high sterility rates due to prolonged magic use. - **Second rank:** Intermediate magi. - **Third rank:** Offspring from non-magi families, like William, who are often kidnapped at a young age (around 4-5) if they show talent and inducted into the elite system.

Non-magi, comprising the majority, are second-class citizens restricted by checkpoints that limit free movement, required to pay homage to the elites, and confined outside city walls. They live in proximity to magi areas but are separated by illusions or barriers. Revolts by repressed workers—often involving

property damage or assaults on elites—are brutally suppressed through street killings, arrests, torture, public executions, or exile to the Trans-Herridan Wall, a virtual death sentence. The economy and government are controlled by the magi, who reserve luxuries and resources for themselves, fostering a culture of rivalry, suspicion, and conformity. Institutions like the magic academy in Thallius enforce rigid routines: dawn practices, inspections, classes, exams, and punishments such as flogging or solitary confinement for infractions.

Daily life is monotonous and surveilled, with global enchantments monitoring magi activity. Social interactions, especially in elite circles, revolve around information-gathering for advantage, and non-elites like William often feel out of place, yearning for the freedom beyond the walls despite faded memories of their origins.

History

Myrah was once a young, wild planet, free of its current gloom, where latent magic in nearly a third of the population shaped ancient kingdoms into empires. This era ended over a thousand years ago with the Arcanian Revolution, when a magical elite seized power, ostensibly for the greater good, to control and stabilize the world. Over centuries, this system corrupted, leading to the collapse, corruption, or abolition of great magical families. Magi powers have declined: a century ago, elites could cast spells without tools or words, but now most require staves, wands, or incantations. To bolster dwindling numbers amid sterility and weakening bloodlines, the elites intensified recruitment from non-magi, including kidnappings. This has perpetuated a broken system that stifles innovation and growth, turning Myrah into a lopsided society where the elites' control is absolute but increasingly fragile.

Magic and Technology

Magic, known as “[arcana](#),” is central to Myrah's identity but has become stagnant, cluttered, and “burned out” from overuse and rigid structures. It is latent in about a third of the population, primarily genetic, though some can be taught. Spells are invoked through sacred words (incantations) and tools like staves, making magic unwieldy and predictable—opponents can hear spells beforehand. Unauthorized magic, such as casting without a staff, is punished severely. A global enchantment network detects arcane abilities for recruitment and surveillance, though it falters in non-arcane areas. Arcana on Myrah feels active with shifts, reflections, and living essences (e.g., monsters emit eddies), but it is polluted and less tranquil compared to other worlds.

Technology is mundane and limited, relying on steam or coal engines for automobiles and heavy gas lights for illumination. Scientific study is restricted by the elites, who fear it could disrupt their magical dominance and social order. This contrasts with Myrah's magical infrastructure, like city-protecting bubbles and barriers against space debris.

Outside the wall

Outside the wall, life is incredibly difficult. The entire planet has been polluted by the megacities but very small patches of green sprout up. A rebellion group exists and is ironically mostly kept alive by seemingly inadvertent 'drops' of supplies. The ruling class needs a scapegoat to maintain their hyper-vigilant security and keeping a permanent lowest-class population alive in the wildlands makes this easy.



The people here have to use magic for survival on this dead world like everyone else, but they try to be more deliberate and have a better understanding of how the arcana needs to flow in both directions.

Myrah represents a cautionary tale of power's corruption, where a once-vibrant world has been reduced to a grey, oppressive prison that drives William's journey to escape, learn, and ultimately return to dismantle its aristocracy. Its bleakness is frequently contrasted with the cleaner, freer, or wilder environments of other dimensions, underscoring themes of freedom, nostalgia, and reform.

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