## **Dernack Eternal:**

What is Dernack? Is it the empire? The people? The name given by the Gods themselves?

Dernack was an idea. Born from a vision made by the first even before the arrival of the Dreaming. A last effort for a declining civilisation. Dernack is the effort to bring salvation for all of their people. After raging fires brought by a disease deriving from the attempt of saving their stillborn. The people of Dernack; my people were not always so powerful as they are today. The story began with a long age of strife. A disease made from the taint of Azelion.

Taint of Azelion
To know who Azelion is we’d have to understand the old hierarchy of Dernack. When Dernack was more known as the Iractic conclave ruled by a handful set to oversee balance over the world of Dera. This conclave openly prayed upon a god named Azelion. During this time they were mostly at peace in union with this god. He brought everyone the prosperity they needed. While he got the life force in the form of bodies to continue his own reign. But Azelion kept pushing the borders of which he reigned and he wanted more. The Conclave who have serviced him for generations are not so keen on letting it all be for not trying their best to satisfy Azelion. By increasing the demand that Azelion has greedily craved. They practically did all his dirty work even if their rule is meant to satisfy the many, not the god which they thought controlled.

Not too long after years of trying to subdue the urges of their master they finally realized their mistake a little too late. Azelion had subjugated a large enough bodycount that he could have ruled on his own. And rule he did try.. For you see, Azelion is a god of life and death. Known widely for his necrotic abilities and also that of bringing life back from the dead and curing illnesses. Throughout the years of service his price was that he got a steady supply of corpses. In return he’d give upon the world the blessing of life. Prolonging one's living.. Curing skin diseases and so on. With the Staff of the Eternal as his legendary artifact. Capable of inflicting both bad and good will. You could say It’s a conduit of his power.

But now with an undead army in his grasp he didn’t need the conclave any more. A civil war ensued. Some are still faithful towards Azelion believing he’d keep his blessings if they sided with him. Then another creates an uprising against their old god. The conclave converted to the people except for one. The people wanted revenge for what the conclave had let loose.. But they had no room to set trial so they took whatever offer they could get their hands on. The conclave used every last vestige of their being to fight back this horde of undead. With the powers that have been given to them during the time with Azelion. Though much weaker now that he no longer blesses them.

But there was one.. Conclave member that still was faithful.. Or so we thought. His name.. “Dernack”.

Dernack filled with the potential of this old god. He was the head of the conclave in the past. He was the one who led them to their struggle. Leading the charge of the hordes.. Killing every former conclave member that might have ruled beside him and conspiring against as well. He waited for the perfect opportunity to strike. All who believed him a traitor were proven mistaken as Azelion and he had encircled the last of the conclave members.. Rooted them out and Azelion wanted to end this entire uprising with his bare hands.. Gave the staff away to his most “trusted” follower. Dernack; as the final strike was dealt. Dernack used the staff of the eternal against its own master. Piercing through Azelion like a spear.. The crystal shattered into splinters as he looked down upon his body.. Twisting and writhing as bulbous flesh bloated and POOPED his body feeling the full brunt of the necrotic powers he himself commanded.. Plague and pestilence and rot and decay. His body is unable to stay whole.. Until his carcass collapsed and his final sight upon who had ended him. “DERNACK you traitor.. I curse the day you entered my temple. I curse the day and every day after that if I SHALL NOT EAT THE FRUIT OF THE LABOR OF OUR WORK! None shall see another labor put into the living of this world again!” and thus as his body decayed into the earth beneath us.. The grounds around us started to rot and spread like a plague. The god of life and death slain with his own magic. Yet this marks the beginning of the Taint of Azelion and the Stillborn curse.

##### The Stilborn Curse.

For many years the Taint of Azelion raged on.. For many years our people of Dera hardened by the harsh soil that grew too little. The world which once thrived was now a slowly dying landscape. What more were born without a soul. Our children were unable to be brought to this world alive. We.. were dying.

Dernack couldn't let this go now that he had the mantle of responsibility at last. With the knowledge he knew and the magics he learnt throughout the ages that he’d been in service to Azelion. He sought the means to their salvation.. Regret that his ambition might have left us more vulnerable than ever before. Though adamant that it was the right thing to do at the time in said incursion.

People still at this point following the last member of the conclave.. Although wary with his previous affiliations. Saw no alternative. Some indeed tried to grow a community outside of Dernack’s guidance. But most failed to even gather enough nourishment to even feed the smallest of their ranks. Many slowly starved away.. Many took their own life seeing no future ahead of theirs. Many tried their damndest to keep themselves alive even to the point that cannibalism started to fret the ranks of the many. Desperation grew to the darkest of my people’s struggles. The Stillborn Curse being so unforgiving nothing could flourish in its wake.

People lost track of time.. And it’s a very blurry line to how long this curse raged for. All we know is that it almost brought us to extinction.

### Dernack’s revelation

In the darkest depths of Azelion’s old temples Dernack found something extraordinary. A tablet filled with ancient symbols. Of distant worlds and in further inspection and knowledge of his old god. He managed to decipher its content. It told of creatures from the void. Incomprehensible. Eldritch in nature. His studies leading from one thing to the other and he started to use the essence left from their dead god to commune with the beings from beyond.. Knowing full well in doing so might bring upon something much like the god they used to serve.. Or something much much worse.

At first Dernack only heard whispers. Of promise. Forbidden words and knowledge he didn’t understand. As time grew he was getting frustrated and impossibly wary. Desperation leading to one or the other thing.. He started to perform sacrifices. Offered up willing people of his own. To no avail. Only more obscured whispers and symbols he couldn’t understand. Until.. His own blood hit the tablet.

An eye opened in his mind. A cohesive voice. A sentence. “Doth thy dream?” echoing inside him. Reverberating clearly. Yet deep. “Doth thy dream?” and then he answered “What is a dream that is at the edge of madness?” and the voice spoke back “Hope”. Dernack tried to ask it a question.. But was met with only silence…

After that he was left alone for quite awhile. The being retreating. This.. was only the beginning however and Dernack knew so. He has tapped into something he does not know yet what. He kept trying to reach for this creature again and again. Day and night he tried. But again he was met with only whispers and symbols. The only difference was these symbols started to.. Change a bit. From day to day.. Eyes were dotting its corners.. Shifting. Slowly opening?

I can’t really tell what he saw other than repeating the scripts that I read about his own discoveries. But he described it rather vividly and with some reverence. Like everything obscured was left with a bit of wonder, amazement and dotted with beauty. Which I presume is because he might have been touched by that which later be our salvation.

As days became weeks and became years. Then it finally happened..

### Dernacks Sacrifice

In the next few pages.. I will be taking up sections from Dernack’s own journals and then write it out into as cohesive a story or tale as I can. Mind you somethings might not be fully correct as somethings are left for interpretation. Not much has survived from that era.

One night.. At the brink of sanity and our peoples demise. The eye in his dreams opened up. The word “Doth thou wish to Dream?” and feeling like this was his last chance to see what this might unveil he answered “Yes, please let me dream one more time.” Knowing there’s nothing else he knows what to do. The voice then said “Then my child. Dream you shall”

The world around him is twisting.. Contorting and changing as black and purple shadows reached out to him. Eyes opening up to him as the borders between reality and dreams seemed.. To loosen. Something lurking within as these things were moving around and gazing upon him. Then out came the formless.. Our father.. Dernack described it as a being so sublime yet terrifying. Its eyes aged with knowledge beyond comprehension. Body shifting before him. Floating smog as electricity arched around him.. Sparking around him.. Both pain and bliss hit him at the same time as it was touching his body. A toothed maw floating out from the smog.. Body of pure energy. Yet there were visages of something more hidden within. He stood there thinking that this was the end. Yet..

“I've been watching, young one. I’ve been seeing all that’s transpired. Just as your people are stillborn mine takes on stagnation. But I dream.. I dream upon a world where all can be lifted by HOPE” Dernack confused asked him “What hope is there in a world that has nothing but pain? What is a dream but a false pretense of something we can’t achieve?” The being before him then nodded his head and the words echoed through his mind with intensity as his touch met with him.. Essence. “The Mark.” Dernack watching confused “The Mark?” The Being came closer “I have a solution to both our problems. Me and my house of Dreams require a place to call our home. In return.. We’ll bestow upon you the blessing I can offer you all. I’ll bring your world from ruination and will firsthand see its flourishment.” Dernack growled displeased “And yet again leave us slaves to the greedy.. I don’t wish my people to be enslaved to another god.” The being contorted and buckled back “SLAVES YOU SHALL NOT BE! That is a promise I bestow upon thee. You will gain my blessing.. And the blessings upon all that is from my Pathenon. We desire to see your people thrive just as much as we wish to be part of its dream. All I desire is to give hope.. Not only to yours but also my own. But.. Sacrifice will be needed for such a pact. If you want the curse gone. There has to be a special pact.” Dernack took his time and pondered over the strife he caused his people and asked “Then if you wish to bring us into your Dream then what is it that you require..?” The being looked deep into his eyes and a hand reached out from the shadows and a claw touched his chest “You” Dernack watched surprised as he asked “Me? What for? What do you need me for?” The Being then said “For our people and yours to meld and be able to stop this curse upon your lands. We.. require a sacrifice most grand or.. More so I require a sacrifice most grand. I require both your soul.. And your body. If you sacrifice yourself to me and give me your soul and form to walk with. I shall personally see to that your name and people will be remembered throughout eternity. With your body I shall be interconnected to your very species and so the curse will be upon me just as yourself. With my essence coursing through your peoples blood.. The Stillborn will be NULL” Dernack confused asked “Could I.. Get time to think?” the being nod his head respectfully “I understand this is a request most dire and difficult. But this is the only way and I can see that you would probably be the only one of your people that would be even considering such a sacrifice to a creature like myself. But do know every moment you waste.. Is another fallen of your own. So do be hasty with consideration not only for your own. But your entire species as a whole.” As so the Dream ended.. Waking with a sweat and a heavy heart. Now hesitant at what is asked of him.

As you might figure out here is where he writes down most of his final words and it starts to get blurry as his own conflicts start to be revealed. At one hand he wishes to help his people at any cost to achieve survival. But on the other hand he can’t predict what this being.. Or beings might do to his people. That and he fought so hard to both gain the position he has in society as well as ending that which almost ended them to begin with. He’s conflicted.. A part of him is selfish and another.. Compassionate. He knows he hasn't been the greatest of people in the past. As ambition clouded his judgements quite often. But he never desired this upon his people. His power struggles partially led to this. So it’s his responsibility to see it through.

That next night we can only speculate as he wasn’t left alive to really write down what happened next. But we suspect that he gave his soul and body to this being. To the being we know today as our salvatore. The Blessed Father of Formless Excess. Walking.. In the skin of our former Leader. Shifted but features still familiar. Leading us to tell the tale of his sacrifice and in turn. As the Father took our hands and offered us that which we desired for a long time. We were.. Reborn. We were.. Reformed. The other 7 of the Pantheon came before us next to him and declared. WE ARE DERNACK the Eternals of Dera.

##### Dernack Eternal Anatomy

The people of Dera can be quite diverse after the merging between Dernack and our savior. All different depending on the chosen god one might choose to do a pact with. 9 widely known variations are apparent with 1 of them being the pactless. But the typical anatomy you can see on people that hasn’t joined in a pact yet can be described like this:

The Dernackian body can be big and small, thin and thick, strong or weak. What’s typical for a Dernackian is their seemingly eyeless skulls with open-bare mouths, with two teeth overbite. Boney mandibles pull out from the sides connecting it to its mouth and are capable of movement to allow access into their mouths as well to better form words. Instead of eyes we can see sensor organs in place of where their eyes would be. Hidden behind a hard yet translucent shell over their skull very sensitive to magic. Their tongue is long and thick and rather coarse as moving out further it gets thinner into a point the closer to the tip we go. Their bodies hardened around their shoulders, back, arms and legs and behind their hands moving out to their extremely clawed tips. There are more bendable claws than there are fingers. Their chest being somewhat smooth compared to their other parts and you can also see bone grow out of their stomachs creating a nearly rib-like appearance which some creatures say over the stomach. Only some shells going up their side of the torso. Feet end up into 4 pronged clawed toes. Thick, long and armored plated tail grows out of their back as well. Ending with a point so sharp it could dig into flesh without a problem. It’s weight hefty and acts as a great defensive tool as well as piercing their targets' various body parts pretty easily. Getting knocked by one of those could also cause a most likely heavy impact. There’s also 4 protruding extra tentacle limbs that reach out from their backs and extend long enough to be able to be used to grab things from the distance and bendable like a tentacle. These tentacle limbs can come in many shapes and forms as they choose different pacts to follow. Some growing maws and some growing hands and then some that have eyes while others have spikes at the tips.

Dernackians can see through their magical connection to the world. Almost similar to heat vision that some of the more infernal creatures we’ve encountered have. Though instead of heat we can see the intricate flow of magic in all things around us and that includes electromagnetic fields. Almost all things have some form of magic seen flowing within the body of living and dead things. Time within the mark has extended this for them to also see the life essence of living things as well.

The purple mark energy’s that has been infused to their body over the years can be seen throughout their form. Flowing around their skull.. Leaving the sensor organs with a purple glow. Visible veins popping up as purple as their blood have changed to adapt to it. Glowing purple reproduction organs. As well as patterns across their body around the face, torso and arms and legs being adorned with the same purple glow.

Then as followed some key changes depending on what pact one might choose:

Hoomarek Voinecture: The people who choose to pact with him usually gain extra eyes, more muscular forms or more overall monstrous yet tasteful features anything could really happen taking on the main Eternal Mark. Their tentacles often have hands or maws

Zeratin: People who take her pact usually tend to gain beautiful mutations and sometimes grow angelic wings. Often their tentacles also grow hands.

Harikoon: People who decide to choose his pact will grow crystalline features across their back and are most likely gonna gain bigger and larger bodies. Often portrayed with overgrown fat and muscle. Their tentacles grow much larger and stronger.

Xaquri: Those that chose him usually grow a crown around their head. Feel their mental abilities attuned and they can feel the lack or need for speech when they can just project their thoughts to others. They often come with magical orb mutations around their bodies that can extend and levitate from their body as they extend their psychic abilities and can cause crushing levitation and gravitational fields to both lift and push and throw. Their tentacles also grow eyes.

The Unknown: People.. Rarely know how these look. But they are often portrayed to grow eyes all over. Their other features seem.. Anomalous. If anything it sometimes feels like they might lose more than they actually gain. Their tentacles.. Also growing eyes..

Decceden: People who chose him forgo their mortal features.. They may never die, they say. But that comes with the beautiful features that we once had. Seemingly their faces no longer as it’s melded into that of worms.. Capable of shifting into eyes and teeth as grotesque as the god they have pacted with. They often hide their faces. Some have been seen eating on carcasses or.. alive. As their tendril-like multitude of worms protruding from their neck extends. Probably the most monstrous of changes within the variations. Usually their skin can be seen decayed and rotten as well as more of their bones are shown. Their tails opened to bone and tentacles into maws.

Criccikoon: Most people who serve her grow horns.. Bladelike spikes and some even replacing entire limbs into swords. Tentacles tipped with extremely sharp spikes.

Zylyph’oc: Most people who pact with Vengeance often grow large and muscular. Some even grow into a naga-like creature themselves. Their mandibles also grow into more similar lines to how their god has and overall gains a heftier tail for better offense and defense ability. Their tentacles either grow hands to support more weapons or become blades themselves.

#### End of page and thoughts:

So to summarize Azelion seems to be some kind of god from the old days that used to have the mantle of responsibility together with the conclave lead by Dernack. The god grew greedy and tried to take full command and wished to; I dare say “Consume” our predecessors. Mutiny grew.. Dernack helped Azelion to kill off all the conclave members that were left. Betraying the people he served. Later to be revealed it was only a guise for him to seize said power for himself when the time drew near. Although his story seems to be filled with a lot of personal ambition and goals he later saw many of his errors at the end. Well enough to give himself to our Blessed Father and bring us into the golden age that we know today. Be it as it may, it's a very daring and interesting tale and parts of me wish I could have lived to see it. Alas we don’t all have such a luxury to see the unfolding of our glorious empire. It both makes me wonder what our Father might truly be but also makes me revel in the idea that such kindness can exist in a creature of such origin. I wish to understand more of this subject but I fear that there’s too little to be found by mere text lest I ask the gods themselves.

It’s also good that I have managed to write out some form of description for our kind. Even though it’s not a thorough and apt detail of our species as a whole. We do have other books portraying us as a whole much better. Which doesn't need to be said here. But none may know when said summary might be the only thing we have left. So something is better than nothing.

Also descriptions of the other species that might serve our Eternal Charge might come up at a later date in a subcategory over “Allied species''. Most likely during explanations detailing events involving their liberation into the Empire.

Signed: Head Timekeeper Qernikat Ispartin of the Department of the Dreaming Tick.