

The Elsewhere: The Afterlife Promontory

It may be surprising to some that the Afterlife is technically on the Material Plane. It is contained within a single, colossal mountain and the equally deep chasm beneath it. It is known as the *Elsewhere* in the Common tongue. In ancient times, it was called *Alibi*. Dwarves call it *Volgeth*. In Draconic, it is called *Ten'cha*, and in orcish, it is called *Kodak*.

After you die, your soul is drawn through the ether to Death's Gate. As you pass through, it opens up to ocean. The soul travels west to find an enormous, lone mountain peak, jutting out of the surf, reaching up through the clouds.

The Threshold Guardian greets you, and directs you to your final resting place. Once you are placed, your soul is drawn--sometimes painfully--to the proper level, and it steps from the ethereal plane, trapped within the mountain.

The layers of the Elsewhere are as follows in order from top to bottom:

Clouds of Caelom:

This gigantic, nebulous cloud continually floats above the apex of the mountain. An elemental realm of Air, it is the birthplace of the celestials. Hidden in the winds are the vaulted halls of the gods. Caelom, the World's Breath, is said to have been the force that gave birth to the gods.

The Apex Terraces:

This is the epitome of paradise, reserved for heroes and saints and those mortals that the gods have deemed worthy of such a place. These levels, green with gardens, are built at and along the summit of the mountain, and the light of the gods shines upon them. It is a place of beauty, pleasure, and inspiration.

The Pasturelands: This is the afterlife for those mortals who lived a good enough life to go unnoticed by the gods. It is a pleasant, peaceful existence. The pasturelands actually take up several tiered levels within the mountain.

The Maze Purgatorium:

This is the sea level entryway to the Promontory. Souls that are not properly interned may find their way here, but they have trouble finding their way beyond this point. It is a vast, dark, confusing place full of tortured souls that look the way they did at their moment of death.

The Pool of Undam:

Not actually a level of the Promontory, but outside of it, the vast ocean around the mountain is known as the Pool of Undam. It is the elemental realm of Water that gave birth to the world's oceans.

The Caverns of Solumus:

Beneath the Maze Purgatorium, below sea level, lay the Caverns of Solumus. In this elemental realm of Earth, mortals are sometimes punished with loneliness and isolation. The souls of those found to be incurable, malicious lawbreakers are implanted into the stone. They can spend eternity staring into nothingness. Occasionally, the gods offer such souls a chance to redeem themselves by offering them a quest to fulfill.

The Infernal Depths:

These levels are sometimes just called the Inferno. The uppermost level, the Mulstrum Flow is an elemental realm of Fire that leaks into the levels below. These lower levels, which the Comhom sometimes refer to as the levels of Hell, are fiery places ruled by devils and other such fiends, which were trapped here long ago.

- **The Mulstrum Flow:**

It is mostly an endless lava flow with floating islands of varied sizes. It is populated by elementals, salamanders, and other fire-based beings. It fuels the fires of the levels below.

- **Vehebrum: The Chambers of Violence:**

Those mortals driven by anger to commit crimes may find themselves burning in Vehebrum. The tortures in this realm vary according to the fiend inflicting them, but they typically involve intense violence and fire.

- **Libaeum: The Chambers of Lust:**

Those mortals that commit crimes driven by lust may be sent here after death to be raped by succubi, incubi, and much much worse. It is a perverse mix of sex, pain, and disease.

- **Gulcrum: The Chambers of Avarice:**

Mortals who commit crimes driven by greed or gluttony may find themselves tortured in Gulcrum. Some souls are repeatedly overstuffed with bodily wastes, blood, or spoiled food or drink by chattering, porcine demons. Others thirst or hunger for eternity, their mouths sewn shut or fiendishly removed.

- **Impietia: The Chambers of Treachery:**

Those calculating mortals that commit crimes by betraying those that trust them are sometimes sent to this coldest level of Hell. After long periods of isolation, they are seduced and charmed by disguised fiends only to be betrayed and backstabbed in heinous ways, and then the process begins again.

The Cold Dark:

The deeper you delve through the Infernal Depths, the less fiery it becomes until you finally reach the Cold Dark, a cell for the worst of the world's Evils. This is where the remains of Noc are said to be entombed. According to legend, there are worse things than Noc buried in the Cold Dark, their names lost to history.